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THE REVELATION

By IVA DURHAM VENNARD



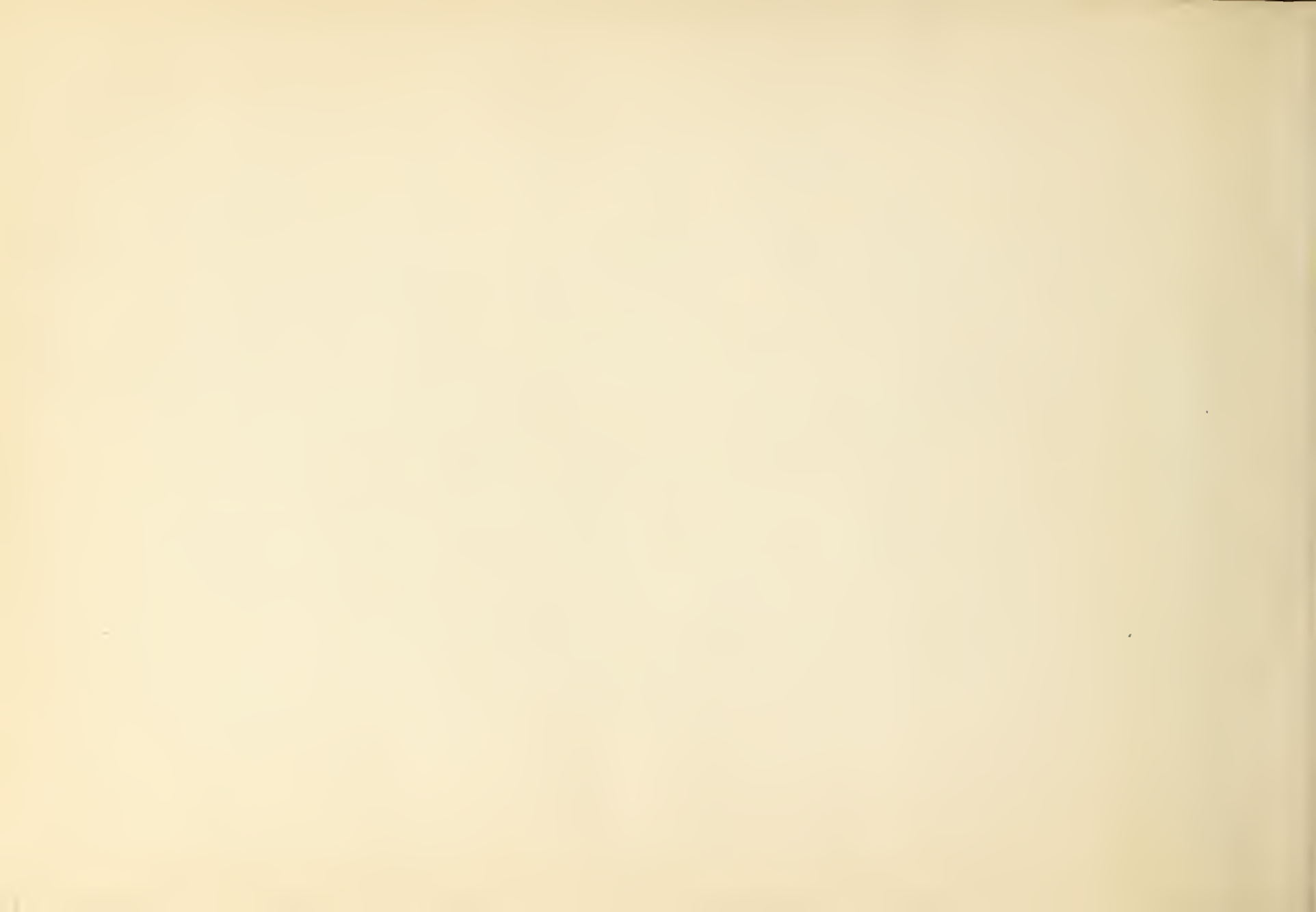
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THE REVELATION

A Students' Handbook

By

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INTRODUCTION

IS the painstaking, detailed study of the Book of Revelation worth while? Is there an intelligent interpretation of the book? Is it intended for the profit of devout souls in this present dispensation? We are aware that not all good people would give the same answers to these questions. It is a generally accepted fact that to the average reader of the Scriptures this book is a closed volume. Many scholars treat it as of secondary importance, taking the position that it is a jumble of incomprehensible visions. Others, who believe it to be in a measure, at least, inspired, think that there is no interpretation of it for the present age, and that we must wait to live into it before it can be understood.

Perhaps no book in all the sacred canon has ever been so abused by having heretical teachers claim its authority for their spurious doctrines; and, on this account, many people have feared to recognize its full claim to their attention. If these positions are correct, why not be frank and open about it, and let some general council of representative Christendom assign it to the Apocrypha? If it has no message from God, intended for the edification of the Church, surely it is unworthy of a place in the holy Scriptures. If the study of it simply leads one into absurd extremes, or if a sane interpretation of it brings one to conclusions that are contrary to the other prophecies of the Scriptures, then let us no longer include it as a part of our Holy Bible.

A glance at the history concerning its authorship and

canonicity will be of help at this point. The external proofs of St. John's authorship are very strong. This book, with the author's name, is quoted earlier than any other book of the New Testament with but one exception, St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians. In a Dialogue of Justin Martin written about the year A. D. 135, the mention of "the Revelation which was made to John, one of the apostles of Christ" is given. This Dialogue was circulated at Ephesus, and here surely the authorship of the Revelation must have been known.

All the Churches named in the early chapters of the Revelation from the earliest period succeeding the time of its writing, with one accord accepted and honored it as from St. John, their Apostolic Bishop. Papias, Bishop of Hieropolis, a disciple of John, who gave much attention to the collection of all the sayings and works of the apostles, accepted and honored this book as the genuine production of St. John. A catalog of the works of Melito, Bishop of Sardis, "the ablest, most learned, and most critical of the Christian writers of his time" (A. D. 161-180), has been preserved, and shows that Melito not only acknowledges "the Revelation of John," but wrote a commentary upon it. Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons, was a native of Smyrna, and was intimately acquainted with Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna. Polycarp was, in turn, a disciple of St. John, probably receiving his appointment as bishop from the venerable Apostle. Irenaeus, having received authentic traditions thru Polycarp, bears definite testimony everywhere to

the genuineness of "the Revelation of John," and states that "it was seen not long ago, but almost in our own generation." Tertullian, who wrote in Africa at the end of the second century, constantly quotes this book as St. John's, and does not intimate that any doubt can exist concerning it. Contemporary with Tertullian, was Clement of Alexandria, who quotes the Revelation as St. John's work, and refers historically to his exile in Patmos.

In the fourth century, a movement known as the Montanist movement became prominent. The Cambridge Bible commentary on The Revelation says that this propaganda went into some "wild extremes" in regard to the New Jerusalem, and, in order to combat what was considered a heresy, an Asiatic sect arose, extreme opponents of Montanism, who thought it necessary to discredit the writings of St. John because the Montanist teachers appealed to his authority in support of their views.

Many more authorities might be quoted, but the scope of this introduction prohibits a more lengthy discussion. In conclusion of this point, let us say that "no one in ancient times cared to question the inspiration of The Revelation, or to reject its authority, except those who, in the anti-millenarian controversy, thought it necessary to deny its orthodoxy." This was destructive criticism, and our modern higher critics follow this same method of discrediting any portion of Scripture which they do not wish to accept. It is food for thought for devout minds that our present day higher critics are among those who ignore the book of Revelation and deny the doctrine of Christ's pre-millennial return. There is not a book in the New Testament whose genuineness and inspiration were more clearly

attested on its first appearance, and for the three and a half centuries that followed.

Having such historical evidence, the fair-minded student will concede the inspiration and canonicity of Revelation. If this be granted, then it really is our Lord Jesus Christ who speaks to us in this book; and there is nothing in all the Bible which He more solemnly guards, or more urgently presses upon the study of all who would be His disciples (Rev. 1:3 and 22:18-19). The authority of this book is binding upon us.

And what of its message? Prof. Milligan in the Baird Lectures on the Revelation calls attention to the dependence of the Apocalypse upon Old Testament prophecy. He says, in illustration: "The great earthquake of chapter six is taken from Haggai; the sun becoming black as sack-cloth of hair and the moon becoming blood (chapter eight), from Joel; the stars of heaven falling, the fig tree casting her untimely figs, the heavens departing as a scroll (chapter eight), from Isaiah; the scorpions (chapter nine), from Ezekiel; the gathering of the vine of the earth (chapter fourteen), from Joel; and the "treading of the winepress" from Isaiah. Not indeed that the writer binds himself to the Old Testament in a slavish spirit. He rather uses it with great freedom and independence, extending, intensifying, or transfiguring its descriptions at his pleasure. Yet the main source of his emblems cannot be mistaken. The sacred books of his people had been more than familiar to him. They had penetrated his whole being. They had lived within him as a germinating seed capable of shooting up, not only in the old forms, but in new forms of life and beauty. *In the whole extent of sacred and religious*

literature there is to be found nowhere else such a perfect fusion of the revelation given to Israel with the mind of one who would either express Israel's ideas, or give utterance by means of the symbols supplied by Israel's history, to the present and most elevated thoughts of the Christian faith."

We would add just a little to Prof. Milligan's statement, and say that we believe the Holy Spirit inspired St. John in his entire being, and that under this inspiration, John has given us *the divine amplification of the Old Testament prophecies*. To have omitted this book from the Sacred Canon would be to have left the Bible a broken shaft, for this book is the capital of the column, making the Holy Scriptures God's own message to man for all time.

It is important to the student to have some knowledge of the two great schools of interpretation regarding this Book: the pre-millennial and post-millennial schools. Not to go into fine technical distinctions, the opposing views may be broadly stated as follows:

As is generally understood, the millennium refers to the period of a thousand years, the manifested kingdom of Jesus Christ. All branches of the Christian church agree that the Lord will return in His glorified humanity, and that the nations of the earth shall become His Kingdom. Disagreement arises as to the time of His coming, whether it be before (pre) or after (post) the millennium. In other words, does the King come first or the Kingdom?

The post-millennial school takes the position that to admit that Christ must come before millennial conditions have been worked out is to cast reflection upon the office and work of the Holy Spirit, operating thru the church of

this dispensation. This school insists that the world is steadily getting better, and that finally the principles of Christianity will permeate the civilizations of all peoples, and triumph throughout the whole earth. They argue that to question this as a result of the present dispensation is to limit the power of the Holy Spirit.

The pre-millennialist, in answer to this position, says it is not a question concerning *the power* of the Holy Spirit. God had power enough to save the world under the Old Testament, had all men been willing to accept His grace; God had power enough to save the world at the time of Christ's first advent, had all men been willing to be saved; but in His infinite foreknowledge, God saw that all men would not accept His mercy. Hence the Holy Scriptures lead us to the revelation of the fact that Christ is coming again before the conditions for His Kingdom are consummated. This is not pronouncing this present dispensation a failure any more than one admits failure by saying that Christ's first coming did not inaugurate the millennium.

The pre-millennialists hold that the Scriptures teach that the divine purpose of this dispensation is the evangelization of the world, tho we are not warranted in the expectation that all will be saved (Matt. 3-14).

This evangelization shall result in the selection of the Bride—the invisible body of true believers—who shall reign with Christ. They hold that the wheat and tares—the good and the evil—will be growing together until Christ comes again; that the saints are becoming more spiritual, but wicked men “are waxing worse and worse,” and that these conditions will become more and more intensified to the end of this age.

As a matter of fact, the name post-millennialist is

almost a misnomer, for a considerable majority of those who are classed with this school are inclined to deny the doctrine of the millennium entirely, and to hold simply that the end of this age brings us to the final judgment. To maintain this position, is to discredit many passages which teach the distinction between the first and second resurrections, and to ignore that part of The Revelation bearing upon this theme as "highly figurative." It ought not to be overlooked that no less authorities than Papias and Tertullian believed in and taught the doctrine of the Millennium.

Post-millennialists urge further that the extreme literalism and materialism of the interpretation of Scripture in which some pre-millennialists indulge is offensive to good judgment and sound spirituality. Hence, consistency demands that these "mysteries" should not be tampered with.

In answer to this, the pre-millennialists urge that it is as unfair to discredit this doctrine because fanaticisms and extremes have attached themselves to it, as it is to discredit any other great inspired truth; and that, tho we may not understand it fully, nevertheless, we must recognize its authority as the Word of God. They further insist that the passages bearing upon this doctrine must meet with the same sincere method of interpretation that would be applied to any other part of the inspired writings; and that to symbolize away this truth into vague indefiniteness, is equivalent to its denial. "What say the Scriptures? What is written?" God's word must be met with faith and humility, not with the pride of human philosophies.

In closing, perhaps a word of personal testimony will

be pardoned. In 1902, the writer became Principal of a Bible Training School. Our curriculum was mapped out for us by higher authority; and it, of course, included the study of the entire Bible. At the time of entering upon my duties, I supposed of course a specialist could be secured to teach the Book of Revelation. The lady on whom I had counted for this was hindered from becoming a member of our faculty. I went to a church official of great prominence, a scholarly and godly man, and asked him to take our class. He received me cordially; but passed by my request with a pleasantry which amounted to the suggestion that it would not be profitable for him to teach it. I went next to an editor of a great church paper with my request. He told me he would travel that winter, so could not give us his services; but added that he would be glad to lecture to our students on his travels when he returned.

Thus my quest for a teacher of Revelation failed. But I felt the responsibility of living up to the curriculum; and in this dilemma, faced that first class of young women. I told them frankly that I was incapable of handling the subject, and said, "I will bring you the best authorities I can find, and we will study together." That was the beginning.

At that time, all my prejudices and sympathies were with the post-millennial school. Practically all the preaching I had ever heard had been from that point of view, and my private opinion was that all "Adventists" of whatever type, were unsound. Naturally, I wanted to find a post-millennialist scheme of interpretation for the Revelation. I read some learned articles that pointed out its orientalisms and mysticism, etc.; and some that advanced the theory of its being a collection of incomprehensible

visions that had evolved in Hebrew literature somewhat after the manner that the Iliad is supposed to have been built into a great epic from early Greek literature, etc. But these interpretations did not satisfy me as a profitable handling of God's word; and I faced the question which I raised at the beginning of this article: why not assign it to the Apocrypha? At this juncture, I began a more careful study of the proofs of its authenticity and canonicity; and with prayer and painstaking research I became convinced in my own heart and mind that it was inspired by the Holy Ghost; that its message corroborated Old Testament prophecy; and that God's blessing upon its study was for our own time. Here I turned with open mind to the pre-millennialist authorities. I have read many volumes, and turned to them for reference many times since.

I find myself greatly embarrassed as I am about to commit this work—the boiled down result of twelve years of study—to print, for this reason: I am utterly unable to give credit to all writers from whom I have gathered material. I am sure that I owe more to Dr. Seiss than to any other one writer, for his Lectures on the Apocalypse formed the basis of my early study; and much of detail I have taken from him. The perfect sincerity of the man commands my respect, tho I am not able to accept his conclusions in regard to many points; and it goes without saying, that Dr. Seiss, could he speak for himself, would not wish

to be responsible for my conclusions. Being a Wesleyan, "dyed in the wool," as regards the doctrine of Christian perfection, this has necessarily influenced all my thinking. Among the books which I have found most helpful for reference have been: Dr. Vincent's "Word Studies in the New Testament"; Dr. Blanchard's "Light on the Last Days"; Bengel's "Gnomon of the New Testament"; and Cambridge Bible Commentary. Beside these, such books as Mauro's "Number of Man," Haldeman's "The Coming of Christ," Andrew's "Christianity and Anti-Christianity in Their Final Conflict," Blackstone's "Jesus Is Coming," and many other books and periodicals have been suggestive. In one sense, I feel that none of the material is mine, for I have in no degree attempted originality in interpretation; and the finished product of my study seems but the gathering and selecting of thought from many and varied sources, together with the systematizing of it for convenient use. But the conclusions I must own, for I have followed my own convictions in the application of the material that has come to me.

This little book makes no pretention of being an exhaustive commentary on The Revelation. If it may prove a help in the hands of students who are seeking to know the word of God, it will have reached the aim of its writer.

IVA DURHAM VENNARD.

TABLE OF SIGNIFICANCE OF NUMBERS

AMONG the most ancient peoples, especially orientals, numbers had a religious significance. This grows out of an instinctive appreciation that numbers and proportion are necessary attributes of the created universe. This is recognized in the Old Testament, and among the Hebrews numbers were considered as having a sacred meaning.

ONE.....is the unit—source and parent of all. God in His most hidden absoluteness of being.

TWO.....signifies the first two persons of the Deity, or the second Person of the Trinity, the Son Christ. It denotes incompleteness, dependence upon one, but productive. It is necessary to the first complete number. Man and wife are two-one; the product of this union completes the family.

THREE...signifies completion: the Trinity. It is the simplest complete unit; the simplest geometrical figure—the equilateral triangle, unresolvable into anything else. Man is body, soul and spirit: three in one. The family is man, woman, and off-spring: three-one. Religion is knowledge, action, and experience: three-one.

FOUR....the world number, signifies creation—the universe. There are four elements: earth, fire, air, and water. Four seasons of the year. Four points of the compass.

FIVE....signifies progress, but incompleteness—made of perfect *three* plus the imperfect *two*.

SIX.....is the Satanic number, the worst of all. The number of anti-Christ is three sixes. Christ was crucified on the sixth day. Signifies individual completeness of everything evil.

SEVEN...signifies dispensational fullness. Denotes temporary, but not final completeness. It is the sacred covenant number between God and man. It is made up of the divine three plus the world four. There are seven epochs in the life of Christ.

1. Christ in the bosom of the Father.
2. Christ in Creation (Active agency).
3. Christ in the Old Testament, somewhat unrecognized.
4. Jesus Christ in His earthly life.
5. Christ of this dispensation, our Mediator.
6. Christ in the Day of Judgment, Judge of the earth.
7. Glorified Christ in the eternal future.

EIGHT...signifies new beginning and resurrection. Jewish circumcision was on the eighth day, and signifies birth in covenant. Christ arose on the eighth day, and marks a new dispensation.

NINE....is the multiple of *three*.

TEN.....signifies worldly completion, especially in the evil sense. The great beast of worldly power has *ten* horns. The lost tribes of Israel were *ten* in number. The church of worldly sloth is represented by the Ten Virgins. The Satanic *six* plus the worldly *four*.

ELEVEN..No significance.

TWELVE.signifies final completeness. *Twelve* months in the year; *twelve* tribes of Israel; *twelve* apostles; *twelve* gates to the New Jerusalem; *twelve* fruits to the Tree of Life; *twelve* stars in the crown of the woman clothed with the sun.

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THE REVELATION

I. Christ in His Relation to His Earthly Churches and His Judgment of Them.

I-III.

A. General Introduction I:1-3.

CHAPTER I.

- 1 THE ¹Revelation of ²Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which ³must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified *it* by his ⁴angel unto his
 2 ⁵servant John. Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that
 3 he saw. ⁶Blessed *is* he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time *is* at hand.

THE great theme of this Book is Jesus Christ, revealed in the Day of His glory and administration; coming forth from His invisible seat at the right hand of God to receive His Bride, judge the wicked and manifest His Kingdom which is even now established.

¹The key word of the Book is revelation. The word is in the singular number, for we have here, not a massing together of oriental symbols and visions without much meaning or arrangement, but a *revelation*, divinely unfolded and proceeding harmoniously from stage to stage depicting actual conditions in the development of human affairs until the culmination is reached.

²The divine title of the Book is *Jesus Christ Revealed*. At the time the apocalypse was given to John, Jesus Christ had been manifested as the Son of Man. His earthly life of humiliation and suffering had been lived and He had become forever identified with humanity. The prophecies concerning His passion and death had been fulfilled. God now gives this revealing of His Beloved Son to re-inforce the prophecies of The Second Advent of Christ that the world may know that this Man of Sorrows whom it has despised and rejected is indeed the King of Kings and the Judge of the whole earth. God does not give this revelation to Jesus Christ for His information, for our Lord has known from the beginning the outcome of His mediatorial work. It is rather in the divine purpose, the setting forth of the Epiphany of Jesus Christ.

³Must—The force of the absolute decree of the infallible God.

⁴The identity of the angel is not given, but it is His office to impart the divine intelligence, about to be unfolded, to John in such a way that he will see the events as actually transpiring. It is not for us to know the exact manner in which this is accomplished. We may not understand the psychology of it but it is not inconceivable that John may have experienced a trance and being “enraptured” the angel caused John to recognize conditions as if he were actually living through this period. John in turn gives to us what things soever he saw.

⁵Servant—Designating the prophetic office—Isa. 49:5. Amos 3:7.

⁶John had no thought that he was writing an incomprehensible mysticism. He believed, and there was inspiration back of his belief, that he was giving a precious message to mankind which carried with it a peculiar blessing to him who would hear and heed. "He that readeth" would indicate the Reader in the Church. "They that hear," the congregation. The original suggests or implies a public, official reading in full religious worship.

B. John's Personal Introduction I:4-9.

4 JOHN ¹to the seven churches which are in Asia: ²Grace be unto you, and peace, from ³him which is, and which was, and which is to come; ⁴and from the seven Spirits which are before his
5 throne. And from ⁵Jesus Christ, *who is* the faithful witness, *and* the first-begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. ⁶Unto him that loved us, and ⁷washed us from
6 our sins in his own blood. And hath made us ⁸kings and ⁹priests unto God and his Father; to him *be* glory and dominion ¹⁰for ever and ever. Amen.
7 ¹¹Behold, he cometh with ¹²clouds; and every eye shall see him, ¹³and they *also* which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen. ¹⁴I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come,
8 ¹⁵the Almighty. ¹⁶I John, who also am ¹⁷your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, ¹⁸was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.

¹John's introduction opens with a salutation to the seven churches, in the form of a benediction from The Trinity. ²Grace, which includes all that God's favor bestows upon us thru Christ. ³From Him which is, etc.—God, the Father. ⁴From the seven Spirits—The Holy Ghost in the completeness of His office and power. ⁵From Jesus Christ—the second Person of the Trinity. Here is a strong testimony to the deity of Christ.

⁶The salutation is followed by an ascription of praise which gives a comprehensive survey of the benefits of The Atonement. ⁷Washed us—individual salvation; the full work of deliverance from sin. ⁸Kings—princely dignity of heirship with Christ. ⁹Priests—the official honor of intercessory labor, the prestige of being workmen together with God. In I Peter 2:5 we find "living stones"—individual Christians—and "a spiritual house"—the Body collectively—In verse 9, they are combined in the phrase—"royal priesthood." In the Kingdom of Christ each individual is a priest.

¹⁰"The formula of eternity"—(Vincent).

¹¹An abrupt change of construction interjects a prophetic allusion with the force of its near fulfillment. Behold! ¹²With clouds—denoting the majesty and glory of His coming. This coming is the fulfillment of the angel's words (Acts I:11). "This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."

¹³This expression refers not to the Jews alone but to all those who "in any age have identified themselves with the Spirit of the Savior's murderers"—(Milligan).

¹⁴Another abrupt change in construction gives the recognition of the Overtowering Personage everywhere present thruout this wonderful Book. ¹⁵The Almighty—Christ uses this strongest term of divinity, applying it to Himself.

¹⁶In concluding this personal prologue, John identifies himself with the body of true believers, The Bride. ¹⁷A better version reads "I, John, your brother and copartner in the

tribulation and kingdom and patience in Jesus Christ." The great mission of Christ in coming to earth and identifying Himself with humanity was to accomplish our redemption, translating us into His Kingdom. The subtle force of the temptation in the wilderness lay in the fact that Satan offered our Lord the thing He wanted most—humanity—the kingdoms of the world, and Satan insinuated that he could gratify this desire without its being necessary for Christ to embrace the cross. Our Lord spurned Satan for He knew that His Kingdom could not be established according to Satan's offer. If the anticipation may be pardoned, let us add that Satan has not withdrawn his offer of the kingdoms of this world and in Anti-Christ he will find a man who will accept it and there will be much ostentation, but Christ having withstood the devil, establishes His Kingdom according to the divine plan, (Luke XVII:20, 21): "The Kingdom of God cometh not with outward shew, * * * for, behold, the Kingdom of God is within you." Having established His Kingdom, by His humiliation and the cross, Christ ascended into heaven and took His place beside The Father as our Advocate, there to await *with patience* the ripeness of the age when God would speak the fulness of time and He, Christ, would come again to make manifest His Kingdom. The human soul enters this Kingdom only by spiritual birth, regeneration. The body of true believers having thus entered the Kingdom becomes the Bride of Christ, and in order that we may be one with the Bridegroom, it is the divine plan that the Kingdom should be hidden from the eye of flesh for this present time, and the Bride should have her period of humiliation. Thus she is fitted to drink with Christ the cup of His joy when His Kingdom shall be made manifest. The Bride must share with Him the patience of faith in awaiting the fulfillment of the Glorious Hope.

¹⁸ According to the tradition of the early church John was exiled on lonely Patmos because he was a Christian. It was a part of his "tribulation."

C. The First Vision: Christ Amid the Candlesticks I:10-20.

At the very beginning of this study of The Vision we must recognize the difference between the types of mind and modes in which the Greek and Hebrew thought deal with symbolism. With the Greek the first necessity of the symbol is that it shall satisfy the sense of beauty, form and proportion. With the Hebrew the first necessity is that the symbol should set forth truly and fully the religious idea of which it is intended to be the vehicle. How it would appear if visualized with an outward form and shape was

10 I WAS ¹⁰in the Spirit ²⁰on the Lord's
day, and heard behind me a ³great
11 voice, as of a trumpet, Saying, I am

Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send *it* unto ⁴the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Symrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, 12 and unto Laodicea. And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, ⁵I saw seven golden candlesticks; And ⁶in the midst of the seven candlesticks, *one* like unto ⁷the Son of man, clothed with a ⁸garment down to the foot, and girt about the 14 paps with a ⁹golden girdle. ¹⁰His head and *his* hairs *were* white like wool, as white as snow; and ¹¹his eyes *were* as a flame of fire; And ¹²his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and ¹³his voice as the 16 sound of many waters. And he had in his right hand ¹⁴seven stars: and out of his mouth went ¹⁵a sharp two-edged sword: and ¹⁶his countenance *was* as the sun shineth in his strength. 17 And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; 18 ¹⁷I am the first and the last: ¹⁸*I am* he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; ¹⁹and have the keys of hell and 19 of death. Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be 20 hereafter; ²⁰The mystery of the seven ²¹stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels

given no consideration. The imagery of the Apocalypse is Hebrew. It is doubtful whether any symbol in the Apocalypse is taken from paganism. It is intensely Jewish.

¹ Prophetic rapport.

² Some commentators interpret it as the Day or period of Judgment.

³ Indicating divinity of the Speaker.

⁴ Christ Himself selects the Churches. There were more than these seven Churches in Asia Minor at the time John wrote, but these are divinely chosen not simply for themselves as individual historic churches, but as typical of the periods of the Church of this dispensation. They typify the entire Christian Body in the successive periods of its history. We are about to be given Christ's decision regarding the Church in its universality and continuity.

⁵ In every language, truth is likened to light, so the churches are "light-bearers." They are not the light, but they hold forth the light which they have from the oil of grace and the fire of the Holy Spirit. The number seven here signifies the whole church of all times and places. Gold is the royal and sacred metal, so the true church is the pure gold of the world.

⁶ He is even now in the midst of His Church.

⁷ The emphasis is upon the essential importance of the human element in Christ. He is recognized thruout Eternity as the Son of Man.

⁸ His garment indicates that He is a royal Priest and Judge of the Church.

⁹ Royal dignity. Symbol of power, righteousness and truth. Eph. 6:14.

¹⁰ Suggesting His eternal deity, also human reverence.

¹¹ Divine, all-penetrating intelligence from which nothing can be hid. The light of the human eye is from without and shifts its focus as the rays fall upon it, but the light in the eye of Christ is from the divinity within, a steady sharpness scanning the darkness as well as the light, the soul and the heart as well as the conduct.

¹² Glowing brass,—beautiful yet terrible in purity and holiness.

¹³ Majesty and power of the Speaker.

¹⁴ Here is indicated the peculiar responsibility and also the special protection and honor of the true minister. Christ holds the true minister in the hollow of His hand. No such one, in such security, need fear the power of worldly men nor the manipulation of ecclesiasticism. Nothing can come to one in this security except as divinely permitted and

of the seven churches: and the seven²² candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.

tho maliciously intended, God will overrule it for good. He "causeth the wrath of man to praise Him." Joseph's brethren sold him into Egypt intending him to be a slave, but God intended him for a ruler and prince. It is significant that Jude 13 designates false teachers as "wandering stars."

¹⁵ A word-sword, conviction, judgment, punishment.

¹⁶ The Sun in Full Strength. Literally—"His face most glorious." It shone thus on the Mount of Transfiguration, and when Christ appeared to Saul on the Damascus road, the light was "above the brightness of the sun." The churches are lamps, the ministers are stars; but Christ is the Sun.

¹⁷ Here are given titles in addition to the Vision, to add to the glory and majesty of our Lord. The First and the Last, again emphasizes His eternity. It is given to comfort and assure the faith of His people.

¹⁸ The Living One—underived eternal life; the strongest claim of Christ's divinity. Yet He was dead—this is the divine mystery. He voluntarily laid down His life to prove Himself capable of taking it again, and thus established The Resurrection. He is now the Ever-Living One, "alive for the age of the ages," the Prince of Life, the Master of Death.

¹⁹ Death holds the bodies, and Hades—the intermediate world—the souls of men. Christ can control both. He will unlock the doors when He comes in triumph.

²⁰ Man can know a mystery only by revelation.

²¹ Illuminators—messengers, leaders, teachers.

²² Their realm is the world. Stars or candles are needed in a dark place.

D. Epistles to The Churches. II-III.

The Epistles to the Churches cover this dispensation to its close. They show that the visible church is a mixed society embracing interminglings of good and evil from its beginning to the end. Together with the vital, divine element there has been ever the mixture of humanism and carnality. It is a superficial thing to jump from one denomination to another, thinking to escape the carnal element. While it is true, beyond controversy that some denominations are more spiritual than others, it still remains that the carnal creeps in and everywhere something is known of "strife and division." But let us not overlook the encouraging feature—Christ is in the midst. The Holy Spirit is surely working thru

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the Church in spite of its mixed condition and it is the divinely chosen channel for blessing, and glorious achievement.

This evil element in the church, as it has worked itself out in history, has shown itself cumulative in its nature. There are two distinct climaxes of the carnal in the history of the Church. Beginning with what were almost a seeming good it culminates in the Thyatiran period in such centralization and consolidation of ecclesiastical power as is seen pre-eminently in the system of Roman Catholicism. In the Laodicean period we reach the opposite extreme—individualism and disintegration; every man formulating his own doctrine.

The following Table of the Seven Churches will be suggestive in defining the periods of this dispensation:

SEVEN CHURCHES:						
Ephesus	Smyrna	Pergamos	Thyatira	Sardis	Philadelphia	Laodicea
Apostolic	Martyr	State	Papal	Protestant	Missionary	Anti-Christian
33 A. D.	100 A. D.	311 A. D.	590 A. D.	1517 A. D.	1755 A. D.	a-b

33- 100, Apostolic church from Pentecost to the death of John.

100- 311, Martyr church from the death of John to Constantine.

311- 590, State church from Constantine to Gregory I, the first pope.

590-1517, Papal church from Gregory I to Luther.

1517-1755, Protestant churches from Luther to Wesley.

1755- a, Missionary churches from Wesley to a.

a- b. Anti-Christian church from a to b the coming of Christ.

It will be seen that all of the Epistles are very similar in structure. The following outline will be helpful in the study of each.

I. Address.

II. A citation of some divine attribute of the Speaker.

III. His complete knowledge of the sphere, duties and doings of the people addressed.

IV. The state of each with praise and promise or censure and admonition as required.

V. An allusion to His coming and its relation to the body addressed.

VI. A universal command to hear.

VII. A special promise to the ultimate victor.

CHAPTER II.

1 UNTO the angel of the church of
 'Ephesus write; These things saith he
 that holdeth the seven stars in his
 right hand, who walketh in the midst
 2 of the seven golden candlesticks; I
 know thy works, and thy labour, and
 thy patience, and how thou canst not
 bear them which are evil: and thou
 hast tried them which say they are
 apostles, and are not, and hast found
 3 them liars: And hast borne, and hast
 patience, and for my name's sake hast
 4 laboured, and hast not fainted. Nev-
 ertheless I have *somewhat* against
 thee, because thou hast left thy first
 5 love. Remember therefore from
 whence thou art fallen, and repent,
 and do the first works; or else I will
 come unto thee quickly, and will
 remove thy candlestick out of his
 6 place, except thou repent. But this
 thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds
 of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.
 7 He that hath an ear, let him hear
 what the Spirit saith unto the
 churches; To him that overcometh
 will I give to eat of the ²tree of life,
 which is in the midst of the paradise
 of God.
 8 And unto the angel of the church in
³Smyrna write; These things saith the
 first and the last, which was dead, and
 9 is alive. I know thy works, and trib-
 ulation, and poverty, (but thou art
 rich) and I know the blasphemy of
 them which say they are Jews, and
 are not, but *are* the synagogue of

¹The name signifies earnestness, yet a giving way of the first love. Herein lies the origin of all mischief in individual Christian experience. When love wanes, the heart loyalty which repulses the thought of evil breaks down and then evil practices creep in. In this first period Judaizers and Gnostics promulgated their heretical mixtures of Judaism and paganism but were held in check by the Apostles.

²"The revival of this symbol—The Tree of Life—in the Apocalypse is in accordance with the theme of the restitution of all things. The Tree which disappeared with the disappearance of the earthly Paradise reappears with the reappearance of the heavenly."

³The name signifies precious, yet bitter. It typifies holiness in the midst of persecution and receives the highest praise from God. The evil which was unformed in the earlier period has now grown to be an influential party and is called "the synagogue of Satan."

⁴The devil—Note that the persecution of the Christians is here recognized as coming from Satan and is not ascribed to the hatred and prejudice of men. The records show that the early martyrs had the conviction that their afflictions were the direct and immediate work of the devil. And the spiritual Christian of our day needs to keep clearly in view, that our warfare is not "against flesh and blood" but against "principalities and powers." True, the devil employs human agencies and uses the malice of men, but he, himself, is the direct source of our persecution.

⁵Is it more than a coincidence that there were just ten years—303 to 313 A. D.—which are marked in history as the bloodiest period of Christian martyrdom?

⁶Faithful unto the measure of enduring even death for the truth.

⁷The name signifies a tower and marriage. It typifies a church yielding to adulterous alliance with the kingdom of evil. The evil which was at first openly recognized and fought as an enemy of the truth has now been accepted as a doctrine. The Balaamites and Nicolaitanes have come into power.

⁸Seat—more accurately, *throne*, for the thought is that Satan exercises dominion.

⁹Doctrine of Balaam,—literally "People destroyers." Some authorities recognize in this the doctrine of the union of Church and State.

¹⁰The act of sacrificing to idols was a social as well as a religious act. Feasts were made of parts unconsumed in sacrifice and for a Gentile to refuse to eat of idol-meat was to withdraw in large measure from the social life of his time. "In times of persecution,

- 10 Satan. Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, ⁴the devil shall cast *some* of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ⁵ten days: be thou faithful ⁶unto death, and I will give
- 11 thee a crown of life. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death:
- 12 And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write; These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with
- 13 two edges; I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, *even* where Satan's ⁸seat is: and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas *was* my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan
- 14 dwelleth. But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of ⁹Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to ¹⁰eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.
- 15 So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the ¹¹Nicolaitans, which
- 16 thing I hate: Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my
- 17 mouth. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name

tasting the wine of the libations or eating meat offered to idols, was understood to mean recantation from Christianity." (Vincent.)

¹¹ Doctrine of the Nicolaitanes,—literally "People conquerors." This is recognized by some as the doctrine of apostolic succession, with the evil of an ecclesiastical hierarchy attending it. There was an historical heretical sect known as Nicolaitanes, followers of Nicholas of Antioch who apostatized from the true faith and became the founder of an Antinomian party which was characterized by gross sensuality and participation in the idolatrous pagan feasts.

¹² The name signifies a daughter: feminine oppression. This typifies the period of effeminacy and corrupt clerical domination. Service in building up the Church (feminine) had now usurped the place of heart loyalty to Christ (masculine).

¹³ Dr. Seiss in his "Lectures," gives an exhaustive study of this figure—Jezebel as a type of Roman Catholicism. We quote the following in substance. Systematized prelacy and Balaamism gave birth to the papacy, that mongrel and mighty thing by which pagan life was transferred to the veins of the Church. Heathen pomp and ceremony was mingled with Christian rites and sacraments. Jezebel, the unclean wife of Ahab, was a heathen married to a Jew. The papacy is heathenism grafted into Judaism. Jezebel claimed to be a prophetess, popery claims to be the infallible teacher from God. Jezebel had "her works;" popery has a system of works, vigils, masses, penances, indulgences, purgatory, saint-worship, etc. Jezebel was an adulteress; popery is marked by its spiritual adultery with the world and its unclean alliances with kings and governments. Jezebel was a murderess of Jehovah's prophets; popery has outstripped all others in the severity of its tortures for those who have exposed its corruption. In this epistle, Jezebel is supposed to be the angel's wife; the teaching of Romanism is the celibacy of the clergy who are held as married to the Church.

* *Seduce*, in the Apocalypse, "never means mere error as such, but fundamental departure from the truth." (Vincent.)

¹⁴ This terrible figure of adultery is used by inspiration to bring out with tremendous force, an appalling fact, that many having sworn by vows of an uttermost consecration to love Christ supremely and give Him the first place in the heart, forget their vows of loyalty, turning back to the old loves of the world. When a backslidden church sinks into

written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.

- 18 And unto the angel of the church in ¹²Thyatira write; These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet ¹³are like fine brass; I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last *to be* more than the first.
- 20 Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest ¹⁴that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to ^{*}seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols. And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not. Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit ¹⁵adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds.
- 23 And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to ¹⁶your works. But unto you I say, and unto ¹⁷the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known ¹⁸the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden. But that which ye have *already*, hold fast till I come.
- 26 And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give ¹⁹power over the nations. And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they

spiritual adultery, the moral tone of society retrogrades and lust is common among the people.

¹⁵ Thank God there are some even in Thyatira who are saved. If the commentators are right in concluding that this period refers to Romanism, does not this passage give authority to say that there will be some sincere souls saved out of Catholicism?

¹⁶ This expression—depths of Satan—may refer to a Gnostic sect of Satan worshippers, who took the serpent as the symbol of intellect and taught that the Fall of humanity was an emancipation into a larger knowledge. The characteristic boast of these Gnostics was their knowledge of *the depths* of divine things.

¹⁷ More accurately—authority.

¹⁸ The name signifies remnant—an escaped few. It typifies the period of protestant return to Christ from Romanism, but is still marked by spiritual lethargy. It marks a reaction. The old corrupt order is not overthrown, but a remnant is escaped from it. The pure gospel is once more preached and largely received, but the conquest of evil is not complete. Carnality creeps in and the new life soon becomes enfeebled. It must be borne in mind that the Reformation with its Luthers and Calvins and all that their heroic service accomplished did not defeat Romanism. Protestantism has become a mighty agency for God in this dispensation but Romanism is, and will continue to be, a world movement to the end of this age.

¹⁹ Perfect, i. e.—fulfilled, complete.

²⁰ The name signifies Brotherly Love. It typifies a church having a comparatively small humble flock of earnest spiritual souls in the midst of a larger company. It marks the era of spiritual revivals and vast missionary enterprises. This exceptional band of brothers in the Lord dwell among nominal Christians so joined to their comforts and luxury that only trial can arouse them.

²¹ The hour of temptation—the period of tribulation.

²² The name signifies the democratic church. This last period will be characterized by self delusion and empty profession with much clamor of popular opinion and self-sufficiency. Is not the very atmosphere of our own day charged with this presumptuous, ambitious carnality that would lead humanity to believe that it will find a way to save itself without humbly bowing at the foot of The Cross? Some leaders tell us it will be done by the discoveries of our modern psychology and others, that we can work out our own

be broken to shivers: even as I
 28 received of my Father. And I will
 29 give him the morning star. He that
 hath an ear, let him hear what the
 Spirit saith unto the churches.

CHAPTER III.

1 AND unto the angel of the church in
¹⁸Sardis write; These things saith he
 that hath the seven Spirits of God,
 and the seven stars; I know thy
 works, that thou hast a name that
 2 thou livest, and art dead. Be watch-
 ful, and strengthen the things which
 remain, that are ready to die: for I
 have not found thy works ¹⁹perfect
 3 before God. Remember therefore how
 thou hast received and heard, and
 hold fast, and repent. If therefore
 thou shalt not watch, I will come on
 thee as a thief, and thou shalt not
 know what hour I will come upon
 4 thee. Thou hast a few names even in
 Sardis which have not defiled their
 garments; and they shall walk with
 5 me in white: for they are worthy. He
 that overcometh, the same shall be
 clothed in white raiment; and I will
 not blot out his name out of the book
 of life, but I will confess his name
 before my Father, and before his
 6 angels. He that hath an ear, let him
 hear what the Spirit saith unto the
 churches.
 7 And to the angel of the church in
²⁰Philadelphia write; These things
 saith he that is holy, he that is true,
 he that hath the key of David, he

redemption by political reforms, and still others, that we will finally develop into our supreme state of bliss thru evolution by the breaking away from the tyranny of past faith, and the fundamental laws of society. And is it not true that multitudes are being so blinded by these sophistries that they are losing sight of the supreme truth that man is hopelessly lost without Christ, and any religion or system of philosophy that promises redemption without The Atonement is essentially false and utterly calamitous to the soul? Is it not true that the self-sufficiency of our modern scholarship is tending toward a denial of the authority of the holy scriptures? Leaders in the American churches are in danger of that subtle idolatry that worships the creations of their own minds as slavishly as the ignorant oriental bows down to the idol fashioned by his own hands.

²¹In passing may we note the touch of irony in the use of this word *buy*. The Divine Speaker tells them that their riches are hollow, their goods worthless; then how can wretched paupers buy anything? It is another way of emphasizing their utter dependence upon the merit of the Atonement. The mercy of Christ is freely given and yet in a very true sense salvation *costs*. Its price is the renunciation of sin, of the world, of self.

It would be impossible to draw hard and fast lines of division between the periods of this dispensation. As a matter of history they verge gradually from one to the other. The churches, as has been indicated, mark only the main characteristics of each period and in almost any period individual souls could be found exemplifying the prevailing type of other periods. It would seem especially difficult to draw the line with authority between the two closing periods. May it not be that even now we may be living thru the transition of the one to the other? Have we not in our present church life characteristics of both periods? Think prayerfully and look discerningly into the church life with which you are most familiar. There are two great arteries of vital energy and divine life. The one is recognized as the Evangelistic, and takes in all those activities that are making for holiness and true evangelism—the transforming of men and women by a superhuman salvation that brings deliverance from past sins and purity of heart thru faith in Christ. The other is the missionary spirit which is finding expression to-day in multiplied agencies and stupendous achievements in the spread of the Gospel. What would the Church be with these two great arteries removed? There would still be a multitude of church members left—a vast, wide-spread organization, “characterless, conceited, vain—nauseating to Christ the Bridegroom.”

Thus we find that in the first four periods, the culmination of evil took the form of consolidation and centralization of power with its abuses. In the last three it culminates in the opposite extreme, individualism, disintegration; disregard of authority, and every man setting up his own opinion as his religion—spiritual anarchy.

- that openeth, and no man shutteth;
and shutteth, and no man openeth;
8 I know thy works: behold, I have set
before thee an open door, and no man
can shut it: for thou hast a little
strength, and hast kept my word, and
9 hast not denied my name. Behold, I
will make them of the synagogue of
Satan, which say they are Jews, and
are not, but do lie; behold, I will
make them to come and worship
before thy feet, and to know that I
10 have loved thee. Because thou hast
kept the word of my patience, I also
will keep thee from the ²¹hour of
temptation, which shall come upon all
the world, to try them that dwell
11 upon the earth. Behold, I come
quickly: hold that fast which thou
hast, that no man take thy crown;
12 Him that overcometh will I make a
pillar in the temple of my God, and
he shall go no more out: and I will
write upon him the name of my God,
and the name of the city of my God,
which is new Jerusalem, which com-
eth down out of heaven from my God:
and *I will write upon him* my new
13 name. He that hath an ear, let him
hear what the Spirit saith unto the
churches.
14 And unto the angel of the church of
the ²²Laodiceans write; These things
saith the Amen, the faithful and true
witness, the beginning of the creation
15 of God; I know thy works, that thou
art neither cold nor hot: I would thou
16 wert cold or hot. So then because
thou art lukewarm, and neither cold

nor hot, I will spew thee out of my
 17 mouth. Because thou sayest, I am
 rich, and increased with goods, and
 have need of nothing; and knowest
 not that thou art wretched, and mis-
 18 erable, and poor, and blind, and
 naked: I counsel thee to ²³buy of me
 gold tried in the fire, that thou may-
 est be rich; and white raiment, that
 thou mayest be clothed, and *that* the
 shame of thy nakedness do not
 appear; and anoint thine eyes with
 19 eyesalve, that thou mayest see. As
 many as I love, I rebuke and chasten:
 20 be zealous therefore, and repent. Be-
 hold, I stand at the door, and knock:
 if any man hear my voice, and open
 the door, I will come in to him, and
 will sup with him, and he with me.
 21 To him that ²⁴overcometh will I grant
 to sit with me in my throne, even as
 I also overcame, and am set down
 22 with my Father in his throne. He
 that hath an ear, let him hear what
 the Spirit saith unto the churches.

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²⁴The limited scope of this study prohibits comment on the promises to the Overcomers in these marvelous epistles. They are pregnant with the richest truths of Divine grace. This closing one of the group brings us to an overwhelming conception of the future victory and honor of the saints. It staggers one to comprehend the power and dominion implied in this promise to share Christ's throne. To sit with him in the throne cannot be the attitude of servants. It is the attitude of authority and dominion. Thus it surely teaches that Christ Jesus is inseparably identified with humanity. He is the Son of Man thruout Eternity.

Notes

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Notes

II. Christ in His Relation to His Glorified Church and The Marshalling for His Forthcoming.

IV. and V.

A. The Heavenly Order.

CHAPTER IV.

1 AFTER this I looked, and, behold, a
 1^door was opened in heaven: and the
 first voice which I heard was as it
 were of a trumpet talking with me;
 which said, Come up hither, and I
 will shew thee things which must be
 2 hereafter. And immediately I was
 in the Spirit: and, behold, a ²throne
 was set in heaven, and ³one sat on the
 3 throne. And he that sat was to look
 upon ⁴like a jasper and a sardine
 stone: and *there was* a ⁵rainbow round
 about the throne, in sight like unto an
 4 ⁶emerald. And round about the throne
were four and twenty ⁷seats: and upon
 the seats I saw ⁸four and twenty eld-
 ers sitting, clothed in white raiment;
 and they had on their heads crowns
 5 of gold. And out of the throne pro-
 ceeded ⁹lightnings and thunderings
 and voices: and *there were* seven
¹⁰lamps of fire burning before the
 throne, which are the ¹¹seven Spirits
 6 of God. And before the throne *there*
was a ¹²sea of glass like unto crystal:
 and in the midst of the throne, and
 round about the throne, *were* four
¹³beasts ¹⁴full of eyes before and
 7 behind. And the ¹⁵first beast was like

With the opening of the 4th chapter we come to a distinct transition. The word church does not recur. The present dispensation has closed and we are now gazing with the inspired St. John upon new scenes. A throne is being set in the heavenly realm.

¹Many of the foremost commentators of the premillennial school interpret this phrase as indicating the Rapture of the Saints, their being caught up to meet Christ in the air, joining Him with the hosts of those who have died in the faith. It is important here to understand that there seem to be two special comings of our Lord, both future. He comes first *for* His Bride, i. e., to gather His saints and He comes *with* His Bride, i. e., to destroy His enemies. These are manifestly not the same event. The true, invisible body of believers—The Bride—is caught up into heaven to escape the period of the Tribulation about to ensue upon the earth. Paul describes this glorious event in I. Thess. 4:16-17. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

In this same epistle Paul sets forth the necessary preparation of the Church for this Glorious Appearing in the divine call to holiness (Ch. 4:3, 7, 8). "For this is the will of God, *even* your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness. He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his Holy Spirit."

In the third chapter, thirteenth verse, Paul further emphasizes the real aim of divine grace—"To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints."

And in the fifth chapter, twenty-third and twenty-fourth verses, he prays that we may have this divine work wrought in us now, in order that we may be ready for the coming of the Lord. "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and *I pray God* your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do *it*."

From this we conclude that the Bride must be a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. Eph. 5:27.

But some one refuses to accept this on the ground that many saints have lived and died

a lion, and the second beast like a
 ealf, and the third beast had a face
 as a man, and the fourth beast *was*
 8 like a flying eagle. And the four
 beasts had each of them ¹⁶six wings
 about *him*; and *they were* full of
 eyes within: and they ¹⁷rest not day
 and night, saying, ¹⁸Holy, holy, holy,
 Lord God Almighty, which was, and
 9 is, and is to come. And ¹⁹when those
 beasts give glory and honour and
 thanks to him that sat on the throne,
 10 who liveth for ever and ever. The
 four and twenty elders fall down
 before him that sat on the throne, and
 worship him that liveth for ever and
 ever, and cast their crowns before the
 11 throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O
 Lord, to receive glory and honour and
 power: for thou hast created all
 things, and ²⁰for thy pleasure they are
 and were created.

without ever professing the experience of holiness. We would say only this that the
 blessed Atonement provides for all souls who have not come to the place of accountability
 and for all who have not had the light on their privilege, under Pentecost, of being made
 clean from "the least and last remains of sin." We would not be understood as teaching
 that only those associated with some particular movement make up this number. All
 such divisions and distinctions are superficial in the presence of this company which is
 made up of those who have seen the power in the Blood and have "the sanctification with-
 out which no man shall see the Lord," (Heb. 12:14) and those who living to the full
 measure of their light, are in vital communion with the Lord, and so are made holy at
 His coming. At the close of the Tribulation Period, He comes with His Bride to establish
 His Throne in Judgment and inaugurate the millennial reign.

² "A throne was being set"—a new dispensation beginning.

³ God, the Father.

⁴ An oriental conception symbolic of the intensity of the light of God's presence. Uniting
 the tint and brilliancy of jasper and sardis gives the strong glare of flame without smoke.

⁵ Even on the eve of the terrible judgment and punishment of the wicked, God still
 remembers His covenant (See Gen. 9:16).

⁶ The prevailing hue—green—symbolizes promise, hope. Another evidence of Infinite
 mercy in this indication of salvation overspanning the consuming flame of jasper and
 sardis.

⁷ Seats of dominion—lesser thrones.

⁸ This number—12 double—indicates completion, suggesting the 12 patriarchs of Old
 Testament history and the 12 apostles of the New Testament times. These elders fully
 represent the many thousands of glorified saints. They are according to the best authori-
 ties, human beings, first fruits of the Resurrection, acting in the capacity of counselors.

⁹ Indicating a throne of judgment and wrath.

¹⁰ Torches,—suggestive of battle.

¹¹ The Holy Spirit, complete in judgment power.

¹² This sea of glass seems to be the foundation of the throne—a conception expressive of
 exquisite beauty and sublime majesty.

¹³ "Beasts," literally Living Ones. Here it were utterly presumptuous to dogmatize.
 There is no final authority by which we may interpret the exact rank of the Living Ones.

One eminent authority suggests that they signify the angelic powers who are to care for the redeemed creation in which the redeemed saints are some day to reign. They may be human beings taking rank with judgment angels in executing the Divine Will.

¹⁴ Indicating great intelligence and discernment.

¹⁵ These symbols of verse 7, suggest the emblems of the leading tribes of ancient Israel. Judah, a lion; Ephraim, a young ox; Reuben, a man; Dan, an eagle. The passage indicates the power, leadership and protection of the Living Ones.

¹⁶ Typifying intense activity.

¹⁷ This phrase indicates the eagerness and zeal of the Living Ones and also suggests their large responsibility.

¹⁸ Holiness is the supreme refrain of glorified human beings.

¹⁹ The difference in attitude would argue that the Living Ones are higher in rank than the Elders.

²⁰ A more accurate translation is *because of Thy will*.

B. The Earthly Administration.

CHAPTER V.

1 AND I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a ¹book ²written within and on the back side, ³sealed with ⁴seven seals. And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, ⁵Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof? ³And ⁶no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon. And ⁷I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon. And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, ⁸hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof. And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a ⁹Lamb as it had been slain, having seven ¹⁰horns and seven ¹¹eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.

¹ As we continue to gaze with the Seer, our attention is held by the Book in the right hand of God upon the Throne. Much controversy has centered around the interpretation and identification of this Book. Some false teachers have, as it seems to us, blasphemously claimed this to be some human book which they would foist upon our recognition as being inspired. We will not dignify their claims by the mention of these spurious human bibles, but without attempting argument will give what appeals to us as the true identification. It is the Book of Redemption, full and complete in its past, present and future phases.

² This, to the Jew of John's time, would identify it as a legal document or register of inheritance.

³ That it was sealed signifies, according to Jewish custom, an alienated inheritance.

⁴ The number of seals signifies the completeness of the bonds of forfeiture. Man's original estate—totally gone: Humanity utterly helpless, in absolute need of a competent Redeemer.

⁵ Who will be able to restore to mankind all that was involved in our loss thru the fall?

⁶ Humanity has tried to find a man who could give us a philosophy or system that would redeem us. The Orientals have tried Buddha, the Moslem world has tried

7 And ¹²he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon
 8 the throne. And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four
and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them
¹³harps, and ¹⁴golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of
 9 saints. And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the
 book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed
 us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and
 10 nation; And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall
 11 reign on the earth. And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels
 round about the throne, and the beasts, and the elders: and the number
 of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thou-
 12 sands: Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain
 to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and
 13 glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the
 earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in
 them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, *be* unto
 him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.
 14 And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four *and* twenty elders fell down
 and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever.

Mohammed, and Americans have tried various "new religions," but every one breaks down, and none of these prophets or systems of philosophy can prevail to break the seals of this Book. It requires One who is more than teacher, more than example, yet One who is thoroughly identified with humanity.

⁷ John weeping is representative of the Church of this time—in sorrow and privation, awaiting the full redemption of the forfeited inheritance.

⁸ The Lion-Lamb hath prevailed. Here is one of the profoundest and most unanswerable testimonies to the deity of Jesus Christ. The very essence of the Gospel lies in this—"*He is able.*" His atonement as the "Pet Lamb" of God has qualified Him for the office of Lion—"to judge and make war." It is as both Lamb and Lion that we see Him here, *worthy* to open the Book. And as we shall shortly see, the breaking of the seals brings us to a view of the immediate future, the tribulation for those upon the earth after the Bride is caught away.

⁹ Christ, the Lamb of God, in His sacrificial virtue to take away sin.

¹⁰ Having imperial strength to conquer all foes.

¹¹ Having perfect, universal, spiritual intelligence.

¹² "He came and took the Book"—Dr. Seiss gives a masterful epitome of the tremendous significance of these words: He writes: "This is the most sublime individual act recorded in the Apocalypse. It includes all that suffering creation, and the disinherited saints have been groaning for thru these six thousand long years of grief and sorrow. It carries with it all the rest of this glorious revelation. By it the world is subdued, Babylon judged, anti-Christ destroyed, the dragon vanquished, death overthrown, the curse expunged, the earth made new, the reign of everlasting blessedness and peace inaugurated, transforming the earth into the unfading glory and paradise of God. It is the legal consummation of repossession of all that was lost in Adam. A thrill runs thru the universal heart of all living things. There is not a holy heart unmoved, not a holy tongue that does not swell the song—Thou art worthy."

¹³ Harps typify the prophetic office.

¹⁴ The treasured prayers of the saints of all ages. No true prayer is ever lost.

Notes

THE REVELATION

Notes

III. Christ In His Relation To The Scenes of The Tribulation.

VI-XIX:6.

We come now to an entirely new series of events. With the opening of the seals, the Tribulation begins. The weight of authority is practically unanimous in the teaching that this—the period of time on the earth, which comes between the event of Christ's catching away His Bride and His coming with His Bride—corresponds to "the last week" of Daniel's prophecy, and will be about seven years in duration. It is elsewhere recognized as the time of Jacob's trouble, for the Hebrew race plays a conspicuous part once more, and in this period many prophecies concerning Israel will be fulfilled, which for our day are veiled and hard to understand.

It is a time of unprecedented miseries and torments. But let the thoughtful student note clearly that these punishments are not arbitrary. It is not as if new elements were dragged in by a spiteful Omnipotent Being for punishment, but rather it is the result of God's withdrawing of the Church. Let it be observed as our study advances, that all the elements of corruption which appear in social conditions during the Tribulation are very manifestly present in the social fabric of our own generation. They will naturally ripen and come to their full fruition of wretchedness as the restraining forces of righteousness are withdrawn. It is the working out of the great law—as sure in its outcome as any law of Nature, its deadly result as inevitable as the existence of a second end of a rope if there be a first end—the relentless working of the law of sin; man is enticed—infatuated—of his own lust, lust conceiving bringeth forth sin, and sin when it is finished bringeth forth death. God seems now to permit Satan to do his worst thru rebellious humanity and a spectacle of "the exceeding sinfulness of sin" is presented to the universe.

It is hard for us to realize how rapidly vice and crime could culminate when there is no longer a saint in all the world, when even the dead are only the wicked dead who await the second resurrection.

Let us call attention in passing to the peculiar construction which the inspired author uses in this division of the Book. We find a series of three sevens and yet all included in the one major series, that is to say, we begin with the series of Seals, then find that the series of the Trumpets is included under the seventh seal, and again the series of the Bowls or Vials is included under the seventh trumpet, and the completion of these two latter series concludes the series of the Seals.

The thoughtful student sees in this portrayal of the Tribulation that the Judgment Day is not a 24 hour day, but a period and that, in the true sense, judgment may be said to have

two hemispheres, the human or natural, such as we recognize as the physical penalty for sensual sin, the psychological result of horror and contempt and hatred that follows avarice and covetousness; and the divine side, the rightfully inflicted punishment of a disregarded and insulted God.

In taking up the study of the opening of the Seven Seals we recognize that they divide themselves into two groups: the first, embracing the first four seals, is distinguished by the presence of the Horsemen, and the prominence of The Living Ones: the last three seals form the second group. Some commentators take it as a law of interpretation that when only the Elders speak, it concerns heaven, or is a matter of instruction. When the Living Ones speak, it is concerning earth and indicates the going forth of power. It is worthy of note that amid all the destructive prodigies of this period, the earth is not interrupted in its orbit, its changing seasons, nor is it utterly depopulated.

The action of the four horsemen refers, according to the best authorities, to the judgment of those "left" when Christ "coming as a thief" has quietly taken what He wanted—His Bride—and gone up into the heavenlies. The action of the four is in a measure contemporaneous. Here, as elsewhere, John arranges his material for clearness of description rather than for chronological accuracy. The opening scenes undoubtedly indicate a religious revolution; many Laodiceans will then awake and submit to the sovereignty of God. But all those coming into the light at this time will have forever missed the highest honors of The Kingdom. It will be no longer the patient entreaty of The Gospel, but the penal infliction of judgment.

A. The Opening of The Seven Seals.

1. The First Group. VI:1-8.

CHAPTER VI.

- 1 AND I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the ¹noise of thunder, one of ²the four beasts saying, ³Come ⁴and see.
2 And I saw, and behold a ⁵white horse:

¹ Signifying terror, judgment, and majesty.

² The Living Ones, sharing in the administration of judgment power.

³ A bid of power calling the horsemen into action.

⁴ These words *and see* are omitted in the most authentic manuscripts and were probably not present in the original.

⁵ White horse—a symbol of victory. The horses of the Roman generals in their triumphal marches were always white.

These horses are not literal but are symbolical pictures of the judgment powers of the Lion-Lamb. Horses elsewhere in the scriptures signify swift irresistible power. Job

and he that sat on him had a ⁶bow; and a ⁷crown was given unto him: and he went forth ⁸conquering, and to conquer.

3 And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say,
4 Come ⁹and see. And there went out another horse *that was* ¹⁰red: and *power* was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a
5 ¹¹great sword. And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come ¹²and see. And I beheld, and lo a ¹³black horse; and he that sat on him had ¹⁴a pair of balances in his hand. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, ¹⁵A measure of wheat for a penny, and ¹⁶three measures of barley for a penny; and ¹⁷*see* thou hurt not the oil
7 and the wine. And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, ¹⁸Come
8 and see. And I looked, and behold a ¹⁹pale horse: and his name that sat on him was ²⁰Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.

39:19-25. Zeck. 1:8-11. II. Kings 6:15-18. The White Horse here symbolizes righteousness. The identity of the Rider is not so clear. If He be the same as the One in Ch. 19:11-16, it can be none other than our blessed Lord Himself. The text here states clearly that his attitude is that of Conqueror. And whether it be Christ, or one to whom power has been delegated, he is evidently the agent who brings about the religious revolution, and multitudes here turn to God. Let it be borne in mind, however, that this work goes on in the midst of the activity of the other three horsemen.

⁶An instrument of war, tho this is a bloodless war of salvation. The attitude is no longer that of the Patient Stranger knocking at the heart's door until the night is far spent and His locks are wet with the dew of the morning.

⁷Signifying heavenly dominion.

⁸The peculiar force of this construction indicates the continuous ongoing of the work.

⁹The words *and see*—should be omitted. Construction same as above.

¹⁰His color indicates fire, blood, vengeance, slaughter. This will undoubtedly be a period of devastating war.

¹¹Power of life and death. Read Jer. 25:29.

¹²Omit the words *and see*. Read note 4.

¹³The black horse symbolizes death and famine. This simply indicates that History again repeats itself. War brings famine and this death from starvation is more dreadful than death in battle.

¹⁴This figure of the rider with the balances indicates famine. Food has become so scarce and so valuable that every ounce of it must be carefully weighed.

¹⁵Measure of wheat, i. e., a man's food.

¹⁶Barley, i. e., a beast's food.

¹⁷This would seem to indicate a merciful intervention, preserving the oil and wine, otherwise all would perish.

¹⁸Omit the words, *and see*. Read note 4.

¹⁹Pale—leprous, livid, corpse-like; the climax of horror.

²⁰Death and Hell—not beings but personified powers. The figure is that Death is a mounted conqueror riding forth on this hideous pale horse with Hell—a ferocious monster tracking like a wolf-whelp at his heels.

2. The Second Group. VI:9—XIX:6.

a. The Fifth Seal, denoting a period of martyrdom. VI:9-11.

- 9 And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw ¹under the altar the ²souls of them that were slain ³for the word of God, and for the testimony which
- 10 they held: And they cried with a loud voice, saying, ⁴How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?
- 11 ⁵And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they *were*, should be fulfilled.

b. The Opening of The Sixth Seal. VI:12-17.

- 12 And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great ¹earthquake; and the ²sun became black as sack-cloth of hair, and the
- 13 ³moon became as blood. And the ⁴stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty
- 14 wind. And the ⁵heaven departed as a

"It is not death but the cause of death that constitutes a martyr." In the study of this seal we note that there are no horsemen and no message, for persecution of the saints does not come from above. It is the Dragon that makes martyr blood flow. It is evident that these cannot be the martyrs of the past for they, at this time, will have been caught up with Christ in the rapture. Therefore, these are martyrs of the Tribulation Period.

¹John sees them *under the altar*, indicating a near and sacred relationship to God; a place of rest under the protection of Christ and His sacrifice. It is the altar of sacrifice. The figure is from the tabernacle.

²The cause of their martyrdom is their testimony to the word and power of God; especially to the fact that the Judgment had set in.

³John's reference to them as souls would suggest that they are disembodied spirits, conscious, alive. They seem to be in an intermediate state, tho not in oblivion.

⁴The cry they utter—"How long, O Lord"—cannot be merely a metaphorical cry like the blood of Abel which cries from the ground. John's description of it as a cry with a loud voice would certainly indicate an articulate cry. The spirit of it is not vindictive. It is rather perplexity, mingled with longing, that the judgment to which they gave testimony seems delayed. Is there not in it also a zeal for God to glorify Himself?

⁵In response to their cry, white robes are given them, as the emblem of God's approval and His acceptance of their testimony. They are told to rest, but are pointed to a brighter day yet to come.

Compare this passage with Matt. 24:29, 30.

¹A sudden shaking of the earth and violent disturbance of the air, indicating the special manifestation of Deity in judgment.

²This portrays a literal darkness such as fell at the crucifixion, only more extensive. Matt. 24:29. Isa. 50:3. Ezek. 32:7, 8.

³The moon as blood—an object of horror.

⁴Probably meteoric formations. Compare with Isa. 34:4.

⁵Indicative of a massive rotary motion involving the whole visible expanse.

⁶The natural result of these stupendous physical convulsions.

⁷It is suggestive to note that even at this advanced juncture, society is still practically

scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were
 15 moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bond man, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the
 16 rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from
 17 the wrath of the Lamb: For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand? _

Parenthesis—

A Pause in Judgments. VII.

—The Sealing of 144,000. VII:1-8.

CHAPTER VII.

1 AND after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea,
 2 nor on any tree. And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt
 3 the earth and the sea, Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.
 4 And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were

the same. This passage points to monarchy, war, caste, slavery, disorder, inequality, etc. But it would seem that, at least for the time, indifference and self-conceit are broken in upon. These who would not pray to God for salvation are here calling upon rocks and mountains. These who had slain the martyrs now plead for death. Read Hosea 10:8. Luke 23:30.

The student of this wonderful Book observes that at various stages in the procedure of judgments one is halted by pauses. Some writers speak of them as episodes and others, as parentheses. They must be properly observed or confusion follows. We come now to one of these pauses, or interludes, which records two most significant matters; the sealing of 144,000, and the record concerning the palm-bearers. We note at once that the arrest of judgment severity is in mercy to the 144,000.

¹ A word in regard to the number. There are those who believe the number should be taken literally, but in our judgment it would seem nearer the truth to take the view of those who teach that the exactness of the number means, rather that the Holy Spirit is, in this way, pointing out not so much the literal enrollment of this company as He is saying that God is accurate in keeping track of His people. The number may represent a vast company much larger than this literal figure, but God will have exact record of each. He is painstaking in all His calculations. Ezekiel recognized Him as "The Man with the [measuring] line in His hand."

² Who are the 144,000? The answer is so plain that one is surprised to find how many theories have been advanced in regard to this question, and how many fanatics claiming to be a part of this peculiar company have had a hearing. The whole passage here deal-

¹sealed a hundred *and* forty *and* four thousand of all ²the tribes of the children of Israel. Of the tribe of ³Juda were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of ⁴Reuben were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of ⁵Gad were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of ⁶Aser were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of ⁷Nephthalim were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of ⁸Manasses were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of ⁹Simeon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of ¹⁰Levi were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of ¹¹Issachar were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of ¹²Zabulon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of ¹³Joseph were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of ¹⁴Benjamin were sealed twelve thousand.

The Palm Bearers. VII:9-17.

9 ¹After this I beheld, and, lo ²a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the

ing with this subject is intensely and exclusively Jewish. The tribes are mentioned and the exact figures connected with each tribe argues that God is going into details to make us understand. The passage as clearly refers to the Hebrew race as any portion of the Old Testament scriptures. If the 144,000 are Gentile why are they distinguished from the Palm Bearers of this same chapter? If the statement that they are numbered according to tribes has no significance why does John take the pains to tell us concerning the Palm Bearers that they come from all nations? To attempt to make the 144,000 apply to any other than Israelites, God's chosen people, is to violate the common laws of interpretation. Our conclusion is that the 144,000 are Israelites living on the earth in the period of judgment. They are a supplementary body to the Church, near and precious to Christ, but converted after the Church proper has finished its course. The Old Testament shows Israel as an adulterous wife going back to her old loves, in her infidelity to Jehovah. Dr. Schofield suggestively remarks that an adulterous wife, though fully forgiven and restored to her husband, can never be a Bride again. But the thoughtful student must see that God is not yet done with the Jews. See Isa. 11:10-14. Jer. 3:18, Ezek. 37:19. There is a morning coming for this marvelous race.

The meaning of the names of the tribes is interesting in this connection.

³ Judah—Confession and praise of God. ⁴ Reuben—Viewing the Son. ⁵ Gad—a company. ⁶ Aser—Blessed. ⁷ Nephthalim—A wrestler. ⁸ Menasses—Forgetfulness. ⁹ Simeon—Hearing and obeying. ¹⁰ Levi—Joining or cleaving to. ¹¹ Isaacher—Reward. ¹² Zabulon—A home. ¹³ Joseph—An addition. ¹⁴ Benjamin—A son of old age.

¹⁵ The nature of this sealing seems to be a special impartation of the Holy Spirit, perhaps a radiancy like that which shone upon the face of Stephen. We are led to conclude that the effect of the sealing is merciful and gracious, given for the comfort and security of the sealed ones.

¹ After this here indicates *immediately following* and we are led to inquire if the gathering in of this numberless multitude is a result of the sealing of the 144,000, which we have just been considering. The thought is advanced by some writers of authority that the sealed Israelites will be evangelists and missionaries in this judgment time. Dr. Blanchard writes—"It will be a wonderful day when the twelve times twelve thousand

throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with ³white robes, and ⁴palms in their hands; And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. And all the angels stood round about the throne, and *about* the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, *be* unto our God for ever and ever. Amen. And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, ⁵These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and ⁶serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne ⁷shall dwell among them. ⁸They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: ⁹and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

are sealed, and one reason why multitudes from all nations and people and kindreds and tongues will accept our Lord in that day will probably be that the chosen people who have for so many centuries rested under the curse which they invoked for themselves in the judgment hall of Pilate, have at last recognized their Messiah and in their hearts have crowned Him Lord of all."

² Who is this multitude? One would not wish to dogmatize here, but there are a few hints in the text that would point to a distinction between this company and The Bride. If our interpretation thus far is accepted we must bear in mind that the Bride has already been caught up into the rapture. The promise has been given that the Bride shall share in The Lamb's dominion. She sits with Him in His throne. But in this account of the Palm Bearers, they are described as standing—not sitting, nor sharing in authority. They have palms but no crowns. We therefore conclude that they are saints of the tribulation, people whom the opening of judgment found unprepared and were among those "left" when the rapture took place. Among them will be Laodiceans who thought they were rich, but awaking under the great miseries of the six seals, discovering their wretchedness, yielding to The Rider on the white horse and repenting, even now find salvation, tho they have lost their crowns. We recognize at once that the Palm Bearers must be a distinct body from the 144,000 and also from the Church proper. The reading of this entire chapter leads one to the thought that the 144,000 are sealed and remain upon the earth during the period of the seventh seal, but the vision of The Palm Bearers transpires in Heaven. They seem to escape the dregs of the great tribulation. They are comforted of God "as a mother comforteth." Sorrow and sighing have forever fled away. But for those who are faithful in this dispensation, paying the price for vital communion with Christ thru His Holy Spirit, there are higher dignities and sublimer joys. As crowns exceed palm-branches and kings are above servants, so is our heavenly estate higher than theirs. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be."

³ White robes are the garments of saints, spotless and pure thru the Blood.

⁴ Palms—suggesting the Feast of Tabernacles—signifying praise and exultation over their deliverance.

⁵ Tribulation saints as distinct from The Bride.

⁶ Glorified, immortal, no longer subject to weariness.

⁷ Indicating God's favor, as the Shekinah was with the Hebrews.

⁸ Delivered from the straits and vicissitudes of earth, these aching, hungry souls have found the Homeland of eternal rest.

⁹ It were bliss to weep were one thus comforted. The suggestion of the passage is blessedness, peace, everlasting satisfaction.

c. The Opening of The Seventh Seal.
VIII-XIX:6.

The Angel With The Golden Censer.

VIII:1-5.

CHAPTER VIII.

- 1 AND when he had opened the seventh seal, there was ¹silence in heaven
2 about the space of half an hour. And I saw the ²seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given
3 seven trumpets. And ³another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer *it* with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which
4 was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, *which came* with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand.
5 And ⁴the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast *it* into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake.

(1). The Sounding of The Trumpets.
VIII:6-XVI.

We notice here the involved construction of this division of the book. The major series of sevens—the Seals—seems about to be completed, but with the breaking of the last seal we find the first of a new series of sevens—the Trumpets—introduced.

¹ This silence was but the natural expression of universal awe, because with the opening of the seventh seal there was revealed the climax of tribulation, immediately to follow.

² Presence angels, archangels, prime executors of God's judgments. The highest rank of servants. But before these angels proceed, our attention is arrested by another—

³ The Jehovah—angel, associated here with the angels in ministry, but differing in nature; Jesus Christ Himself. He has the golden censer with the incense. He has the prayers of all saints of all ages and offers them here for complete fulfillment. They are brought to remembrance now because the time is ripe to avenge His elect. No true prayer is ever lost, nor is it forgotten of God, tho its fulfillment may be long delayed. The burden of all prayer of every generation is "Thy Kingdom come: Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven." The one lesson set for humanity to learn is that God's will is always best. This is the fundamental law that insures the bliss of heaven.

⁴ Jesus Christ here initiates the climax of wrath. The savor of life—holy fire from the altar—becomes the savor of death. God's mercy and grace despised heightens and intensifies damnation. Perdition is perverted grace. The inverted censer pours holy fire into a wicked world bringing torture and destruction. Mal. 4:1.

Trumpets are used in the Scriptures: I. In connection with war. Num. 10:9. Jer. 4:19. II. For the convocation of the people and the moving of camps. Num. 10. III. To

(a). The First Group—Four.

VIII:6-13.

- 6 And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets ¹prepared themselves
 7 ²to sound. ³The first angel sounded, and there followed ⁴hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and ⁵the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green
 8 grass was burnt up. And the second angel sounded, and as it were ⁶a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of
 9 ⁷the sea became blood; And the third part of the ⁸creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed.
 10 And the third angel sounded, and there fell a ⁹great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and
 11 upon the ¹⁰fountains of waters; And the name of the star is called ¹¹Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they
 12 were made bitter. And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of
 13 ¹²the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the
 night likewise. And I beheld, and heard an ¹³angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, ¹⁴Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabit-

proclaim the great festivals. Num. 10:10. Lev. 23:24. II. Chron. 29:27. IV. To announce royalty. II. Kings 9:13. V. As the announcement of the terrible majesty and power of God. Exod. 19:16. Amos 3:6. VI. In connection with the overthrow of the ungodly. Josh. 6:13-16. VII. To proclaim the laying of the foundation of God's Temple. Rev.

¹The text would suggest that God had appointed these archangels to oversee this phase of the Tribulation and they with their own sublime intelligence, arrange among themselves, the order in which they will proceed.

²When these trumpets give out their clangor the vibrations will run thru the universe, and everything created for human blessedness will turn into a source of disaster to them who obey not the gospel of Christ. (See note 4 under previous passage.)

³The first trumpet:—We are now in the midst of plagues. These plagues must be taken as literally as the plagues of Egypt. Herein are the prophecies of the renewal of the plagues of Egypt fulfilled.

⁴Literally hail and fire mingled in blood. "Hail stones and fire balls fell in a shower of blood." *And the third part of the earth was burnt up* is added in some of the most authentic manuscripts.

⁵The third part may not be interpreted with exact literalism, but it suggests that God is working by a well defined plan and that His purpose will be accurately realized.

⁶This "great mountain" will probably be a great meteoric mass clothed in seething, thundering flames and dashing into the sea. Hosea 4:1-3. Isa. 2:12-21. Joel 2:30. Exod. 9:24.

⁷Probably the Mediterranean, for this is the historical sea. Exod. 7:20. Psa. 105:29. Psa. 78:44.

⁸The fish is one of God's precious gifts to man. Fish was the principal food of Jesus during His earthly life. Zeph. 1:3.

⁹This great star is another meteoric phenomenon, probably a comet.

¹⁰The rivers, springs, fountains and wells.

¹¹This star will have poisonous properties. Wormwood is absinthe, a bitter, intoxicating, poisonous herb producing convulsions, paralysis and death. Wormwood is used metaphorically in the Old Testament signifying idolatry (Deut. 29:18) and calamity (Jer. 9:15).

¹²The plague ushered in by the sounding of the fourth trumpet will produce a fearful

ers of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!

(b). The Woe Trumpets—Three.
Second Group. IX-XI.

CHAPTER IX-XI.

1'. The First Woe. IX:1-12.

1 AND the fifth angel sounded, and I saw ¹a star ²fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key
2 of the bottomless pit. And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the
3 smoke of the pit. And there came out of the smoke ³locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the ⁴scorpions of the earth have
4 power. And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in
5 their foreheads. And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented ⁵five months: and their torment *was* as the torment of a scorpion, when he strik-

and disastrous obscuration of the sources of light and heat, disturbing the seasons, hindering the ripening of fruits and harvests and filling the world with sickness and gloom. Isa. 13:9. Jer. 4:23-28. Ezek. 32:7-8. Joel 2:10 and 30, 31. Joel 3:15. Amos 5:20. Zeph. 1:14-16. Matt. 24:29.

¹³Literal translation—*an eagle*. Symbolic of vengeance. Deut. 28:49. Hosea 8:1. Hab. 1:8.

¹⁴A final warning prompted by Divine mercy. God gives over the wicked to destruction with great reluctance.

In the first six periods the plagues were obviously of human origin, but now we recognize that the torments of hell are introduced upon the theater of this world. Dr. Blanchard in his work—*Light on the Last Days*—sums it up thus: "The judgments of the tribulation time are self-caused and divinely inflicted. They involve the hatred and malice and cruelties of men, but are also rightful inflictions of an insulted God and the torment and death inflicted by infernal agents who pour forth from the bottomless pit where Satan is confined."

Because of the evil time, Satan with a will overflowing with malignant hatred toward men is permitted special power. (Rom. 1:19-23.) The key of the pit of the abyss is given to him, i. e., he is permitted to loose his evil agencies. (Luke 8:27-31.) The scripture indicates that there is an abyss, dark and horrible, tenanted by demons. Here they take the form of infernal locusts, having a certain degree of intelligence. They can distinguish the seal of God. Their power is limited.

If we attempt to confine our conception of this pit of the abyss to a literal place we encounter many difficulties as to the exact location. May there not be a subjective meaning here as well as an objective reality? May one meaning of this pit not be "the state of moral corruption in which all beings are who will evil and reject holiness"? If we admit this thought then the word *bottomless* takes on grave significance. The psychological laws which govern us indicate that we are tending continually to fixedness of character. "Every free act tends to perpetuate the character out of which it springs. This is a reward of righteousness. It is a terrific penalty of sin." Sin becomes more powerful as it becomes habitual. In a bottomless pit demons are forever sinking farther away from God and holiness.

6 eth a man. And in those days shall
 6^{men} seek death, and shall not find it;
 and shall ⁷desire to die, and death
 7 shall flee from them. And the ⁸shapes
 of the locusts *were* like unto horses
 prepared unto battle; and on their
 heads *were* as it were crowns like
 gold, and their ⁹faces *were* as the faces
 8 of men. And they had ¹⁰hair as the
 hair of women, and their teeth were
 9 as ¹¹the teeth of lions. And they had
¹²breastplates, as it were breastplates
 of iron; and the sound of their wings
was as the sound of chariots of many
 10 horses running to battle. And they
 had tails like unto scorpions, and
 there were stings in their tails: and
 their power *was* to hurt men five
 11 months. And they had a ¹³king over
 them, *which is* the angel of the bot-
 tomless pit, whose name in the He-
 brew tongue *is* ¹⁴Abaddon, but in the
 Greek tongue hath *his* name Apollyon.
 12 One woe is past; *and*, behold, there
 come two woes more hereafter.

2'. The Second Woe. IX:13-21.

13 And the sixth angel sounded, and I
 heard a voice from the ¹four horns of
²the golden altar which is before God,
 14 Saying to the sixth ³angel which had
 the trumpet, Loose the ⁴four angels
 which are bound in ⁵the great river
 15 Euphrates. And the four angels were
 loosed, which were prepared ⁶for an
 hour, and a day, and a month, and a
 year, for to slay the third part of

¹Not a meteor but an intelligent agent. (Jude 6. II. Pet. 2:4.) Satan is recognized as a fallen spiritual star.

²Literally—fallen. The star is seen as fallen.

³Compare with the eighth plague of Egypt. (Exod. 10:14, 15.) These locusts were a sort of infernal cherubim; antipodes of The Living Ones.

⁴The wilderness of Sinai even to this day is inhabited by these creatures shaped like a lobster, whose sting is in the extremity of the tail.

⁵Extreme duration of this anguish. No natural locust lives so long. Death would be preferable to such torment.

⁶The men, i. e., those men thus stung.

⁷Desire *vehemently* to die.

⁸Shapes, i. e., likenesses. The likeness of the locust to a horse is so striking that the Germans call them *hay-horses*.

⁹The face of the locust bears a distant resemblance to the human face.

¹⁰There is an Arabic proverb in which the antennae of the locust are compared to a girl's hair.

¹¹Compare with Joel 1:6.

¹²The breast of a locust resembles the plates of a horse's armor.

¹³This distinguishes them from natural locusts.

¹⁴Not Satan but one of his subordinates. The name signifies destroyer, the opposite of Savior.

The object of the second woe seems to be partly retributive and partly reformatory. It indicates the righteous indignation of outraged justice that will not longer endure the superlative wickedness of man. And yet two-thirds of the race are spared not because they are better than those who died, but because God still remembers mercy. And who would have it otherwise? Christ must and will exercise the power to punish wrongdoers. All authority carries with it its degree of this power. The parent and the teacher must exercise it or fail in their responsibility.

But tho the powers of hell are let loose upon the guilty world *they repent not*. Such is depraved and infatuated humanity. The power that turns men to God is the convict-

16 men. And the number of ⁷the army of the horsemen *were* two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the
 17 number of them. And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses *were* as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued ⁸fire and smoke and
 18 brimstone. By these ⁹three was the ¹⁰third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their
 19 mouths. For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails *were* ¹¹like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do
 20 hurt. And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood; which neither can see, nor hear, nor
 21 walk. Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.

ing power of the Holy Spirit and *now*—this present dispensation—is the day of salvation. Suffering is used by the Holy Spirit to make men halt and think, but it cannot save. Then, as now, salvation can come only thru the uplifted Christ. (Luke 16:31.)

¹ Four horns, significant of the energy and universality of the demand.

² This call from the Golden Altar which stands in the immediate presence of God reflects the character of this apostacy. God's appointed way of forgiveness has been set aside, the Holy Ghost rejected, the Atonement despised, the only Mediator denied. Man's antagonism against the Cross turns the Blood of Jesus upon the Golden Altar to a cry for vengeance.

³ This suggests a being of superior order as he has binding and loosing power over other angels.

⁴ This is the world number. These are not good angels. Their own malicious nature impels them to slaughter.

⁵ Euphrates was, to the Old Testament prophets, the symbol of all the calamity of divine judgment. It was here that Satan tempted Eve, here that the first murder was committed, here that Babylon supplanted Eden.

⁶ In his Word Studies, Dr. Vincent suggests that the meaning here is that the angels are prepared unto the hour appointed by God, and that this hour shall fall in its appointed day and month and year.

⁷ The four angels have power to let loose this enormous host of infernal cavalry which have power to kill with their breath and torment with their tails.

⁸ Fire and smoke and brimstone are all elements of hell.

⁹ These three plagues, i. e., fire, smoke, brimstone.

¹⁰ The fearful havoc of human life here depicted will be far more widespread than the death of the first born in Egypt.

¹¹ Like unto serpents—"Long, smooth, subtle, clasping their victim in an embrace from which he cannot escape."

The closing verses of this chapter give us a significant analysis of the state of society at the time of this second woe.

I. It is a period in which demon worship abounds. Some teach that "demons are the souls of dead men who bore an evil record in this life." I. Cor. 10:20-21. Deut. 18:10, and 32:17.

Demon possession supersedes the will of the individual possessed. Such people have frequently been considered inspired prophets. (Acts 16:16-18.)

"Black art, occultism, familiar spirits, enchanter, wizards, witches, magicians, and sooth-sayers, diviners, necromancers and modern spiritualism" (Deut. 18:9-12; I. Tim. 4:13) are forerunners of this period. Instead of fearing and loving God, men bestow their confidence on unclean spirits and at last God gives them over to believe a lie, and their worship becomes demon worship.

II. It will be marked by A Revival of Idolatry. Men will again use their genius to invent idols and various machines that will facilitate intercourse with their demon gods.

III. Demon Worship. The dominant religion produces a heathen state of morals. *Murder*, common in all its forms; foeticide, infanticide and homicide. *Soreeries*, these include impure practices with harmful drugs, poisons, love potions, etc., and the reckless breaking of the laws of nature with the idea that sorcery can prevent the evil result. This becomes utter moral degeneracy. *Incontinence*, free love prevalent; marriage condemned as tyrannical; divorce unnecessary. *Dishonesty*, the obliteration of moral distinctions; the practices of fraud, theft and deceit; business utterly corrupt.

Parenthesis—

A Second Pause. The Little Book. X.

CHAPTER X.

1 AND I saw ¹another mighty angel
come down from heaven, ²clothed
with a cloud: and ³a rainbow *was* upon
his head, and his face *was* as it were
⁴the sun, and his feet as pillars of
2 fire: And he had in his hand ⁵a little
book open: and he set his right foot
upon the sea, and *his* left foot on the
3 earth. ⁶And cried with a loud voice,
as *when* a lion roareth: and when he
had cried, ⁷seven thunders ⁸uttered
4 their voices. And when the seven
thunders had uttered their voices, I
was about to write: and I heard a

¹This mighty angel would seem to be our Lord Jesus Christ. *Angel* in this sense is an official title, not an indication of character. The angel in this vision is engaged in the sublime act of formally claiming possession of the earth. The little Book of Inheritance is his warrant for such an act. Redemption proceeds on a legal basis—Christ has paid the price. The ultimate disposal of the Book corresponds with its character. The grand purpose of all Christ has done in taking the Book from the throne and opening its seals and claiming its possession of the earth, is that His disciples may have the benefit. The effect of eating the roll also corresponds—sweet is the gospel: bitter is the persecution that is sure to come in some form.

²This expression occurs seven times in the Apocalypse and in every case is connected with Jesus Christ. The cloud indicates infinite majesty. He—the Angel—is not one of the created beings.

³This is God's own mark. It identifies Him with the ancient covenant. Clouds—storm—judgment: rainbow—mercy in the midst of judgment.

voice from heaven saying unto me,
 Seal up those things which the seven
 thunders uttered, and ⁹write them not.
 5 And the angel which I saw stand
 upon the sea and upon the earth lifted
 6 up his hand to heaven, and sware by
 him that liveth for ever and ever, who
 created heaven, and the things that
 therein are, and the earth, and the
 things that therein are, and the sea,
 and the things which are therein, that
 7 there should be time no longer: But
 in the days of the voice of the sev-
 enth angel, when he shall begin to
 sound, ¹⁰the mystery of God should be
 finished, as he hath declared to his
 servants the prophets.
 8 And the voice which I heard from
 heaven spake unto me again, and said,
 Go and take the little book which is
 open in the hand of the angel which
 standeth upon the sea and upon the
 9 earth. And I went unto the angel,
 and said unto him, Give me the little
 book. And he said unto ¹¹me, Take
 it, and eat it up; and it shall make
 thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy
 10 mouth sweet as honey. And I took
 the little book out of the angel's
 hand, and ate it up; and it was in
 my mouth sweet as honey: and as
 soon as I had eaten it, my belly was
 11 bitter. And he said unto ¹²me, Thou
 must prophesy again before many
 peoples, and nations, and tongues, and
 kings.

⁴This identifies Him with the Vision of Chapt. I.

⁵The Book of Inheritance. Its seals are broken now.

⁶The lion-cry of Jesus; not a cry of distress but a shout of power. (Jer. 25:29-31.)

⁷The Judgment thunders of the Throne; the wrath of the Almighty.

⁸Some commentators suggest that *voices* here denotes intelligence: the voice of con-summated divine indignation.

⁹What was uttered cannot be known until we, ourselves, hear the voices.

¹⁰Dr. Blanchard suggests that the *mystery of God* here indicates His incarnation in Jesus Christ, His suffering for the redemption of the world and the processes of judgment thru which He would take possession of the world as His rightful realm. Dr. Seiss says it signifies the final sum of all revelation of God's doings for man's reinstatement to his lost inheritance; the ultimate realization of all prophecy.

¹¹John here represents the entire body of believers—The Church.

¹²This carries the thought of compulsion. It costs pain in every generation to be a true unflinching witness for Christ. To prophesy is not merely to foretell the future but to *witness*. A prophet is one thru whom God speaks. (I. Cor. 6:2. Psal. 149:5-9.)

The Two Witnesses. XI:1-14.

CHAPTER XI.

- 1 AND there was given me a ¹reed like unto a rod; and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and ²measure the ²temple of God, and the altar, and them that
- 2 worship therein. But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot ⁴forty and two
- 3 ⁵months: And I will give *power* unto ⁶my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth.
- 4 These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the
- 5 God of the earth. And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed.
- 6 These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy; and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as
- 7 often as they will. And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and
- 8 kill them. And their dead bodies *shall lie* in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall

This passage is an immediate continuation of Chapter X. As we come to this chapter we face one of the most difficult portions of this entire book, and consequently one which has been the theme of much controversy.

In the first verse we notice the changed attitude of John. He is now an actor—no longer merely a spectator. This would seem to indicate the process of taking possession of the redeemed inheritance.

¹The reed—a rule—from the same root as canon—law. It is a measuring rod, but also an instrument of chastisement, indicating an afflictive or revolutionizing measurement.

²Judgment administrations have two series of currents:—(1) The upward, in which the good passes out of the world as if abandoning everything to perdition. (2) The downward, in which the good comes again in glorious power to possess everything. The point of beginning for both is the Temple of God. But this cannot be the same Temple. The first is mystical, the second more literal. In this chapter we are at the beginning of the second current. The Temple of this second current can hardly be considered the Church. It is peculiarly Jewish. The holy city trampled by the Gentiles is undoubtedly Jerusalem. Neh. 11:1. Isa. 52:1. Matt. 4:5 and 27:52, 53.

The 144,000 are still on earth at this period. Many authorities agree that prophecy teaches that Jerusalem will again be populated by the Jews, its temple rebuilt; its ancient worship restored. This new temple will need to be purged before Christ fully accepts it, for it is this temple which the anti-Christ desecrates. The fact that the court of the Gentiles is rejected proves that we have passed out of the present dispensation, and the Jews are again the Chosen Ones. (Romans 11:21-25.)

The measurement of the temple typifies the regrafting of the Jews upon the old theocratic root, of the native olive tree. The Gentiles persecute the worshippers, desecrate the altar, and set up an idol in Jehovah's place, and the consummation of all plagues falls upon them. The Gentiles trample the Holy City forty-two months.

³This measuring is a judicial act, the sign of appropriation. That which is measured belongs to the redeemed.

⁴This forty-two months is three and a half years. (See Dan. 7:25 and 12:7.) $7 \times 6 =$ the completion of evil. Israel in the wilderness passed forty-two stations. The number of boys who mocked Elisha was forty-two.

- see their dead bodies three days and a half, and shall not suffer their dead
- 10 bodies to be put in graves. And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them
- 11 that dwelt on the earth. And after three days and a half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them.
- 12 And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies
- 13 beheld them. And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand: and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God
- 14 of heaven. The second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly,

⁵Months are commonly used to signify trouble. The Philistines had the ark seven months. The flood was measured by months.

⁶The Two Witnesses do not appear to John in a vision but are described by Jesus Christ. This indicates something extraordinary. The text implies that they are not bodies of people, but individuals: they wear sack-cloth, work miracles and prophesy,—only real persons can do this.

(a) *Who are they?* No one can give a positive answer to this question. They accompany the measurers, but the witnesses only are put to death. The measurers had died before; these had not tasted death. Malachi 3:4; John 1:19-20; Matt. 17:10-11. Some commentators are of the conviction that Enoch is one of these witnesses; but perhaps there is even better authority in favor of the view that Moses is one. There is a general consensus of interpretation among the pre-millennial commentators that Elijah is the other one of the witnesses. There is abundant evidence that John the Baptist is not one of these witnesses, for, though he was dead before the transfiguration, it was not he, but Moses and Elijah, who appeared with Christ. He was the Elias of Christ's first coming, but not the restorer of all things. (John 1:21.) The scripture foretells two comings of the Messiah and two of Elias. This was taught by the early church fathers. Moses and Elijah were pre-eminently the judgment prophets: witnesses of Christ not so much as the Redeemer but as the Judgment Angel.

(b) *Their Times* are very evil. There is great sorrow; sack-cloth is the garb of judgment calamity. It is no longer the gospel, but the judgment dispensation. The world is full of malignant evil; hell is incarnated in anti-Christ. Intense supernaturalism and miracle working is practiced both by the Witnesses and the evil powers. Anti-Christ concentrates in himself, the worst impieties of all ages. Nature seems about to be entirely superseded.

(c) *Their Work*: prophetic. They are God's messengers to teach and attest His truth and purposes. They are supernatural beings, breathing out fire, having power to avenge themselves and to torment the wicked; they embody the law spirit, withholding the rain: punishing for apostasy (Deut. 28:23, 24) and infamous idolatry. Their turning of water to blood is a rebuke to the blasphemies of unprincipled power, the oppressions of authority and murders of persecuting government. The authorities teach that these witnesses are the two olive trees spoken of by Zachariah and Ezekiel. They will lead in the restora-

tion of ancient Israel; inaugurate the worship of God's people, and lead in the setting up of the theocratic rule and the return of the smitten nation. These witnesses after all are messengers of mercy. Their warnings are prompted by kindness, but their ministry is no more effective than of old. A few are saved, and but for them the whole race would yield to the anti-Christ. Mal. 6.

(d) *Their End*: the mightiest of sacred ministries and the shortest. These witnesses are immortal until their work is done, no evil power can touch or bind them; but when their work is done they are vanquishable. They are probably beheaded.

They are killed in the great city. Authorities differ as what city this will be, some suggest Babylon, others believe it will be Jerusalem. Their bodies are denied burial—this is an outrage upon decency and humanity. These prophets are treated with greater insult than the worst criminals. This shows the malignity against the power of these two witnesses and reveals the monstrous and unrelenting devilishness in human hearts under the sway of anti-Christ. In their fiendish insanity they congratulate each other thinking they are escaping punishment by killing God's messengers. But the two witnesses do not remain dead. They are brought to life but they do not seek vengeance; their mission is ended. They are caught up to heaven, earthquakes attending as at the ascension of Jesus. The wicked in their terror acknowledge the divine power as devils believe and tremble but this does not imply that they repent.

Return to Main Outline. Christ in
His Relation to Scenes of The
Tribulation. Trumpets.

3'. Sounding of The Last Trump.
XI:15-19.

15 And the seventh angel sounded; and
there were 'great voices in heaven,
saying, The kingdoms of this world
are become *the kingdoms* of our Lord,
16 and of his Christ; and he shall reign
for ever and ever. And the four and

This passage deals with the grand climactic period of time. The text here gives merely a summary of chief events; a syllabus of the consummation of the mystery of God. The entire fulfillment of this period covers everything this side of completed redemption.

The Items Embraced in the Last Trump may be outlined as follows:

I. A radical change in the government of the world. Date future, tense present. This construction peculiar to prophetic language. The governments of our present day are not the Lord's. They are represented as wild beasts: there are no truly Christian nations, though Christian men are aiding in their administration as did Joseph and Daniel. The devil is de facto, the king of this world though he be a usurper. Law cannot produce ideal conditions. Evil passions are nowhere more defiant against God than in politics. Revolutions, reforms, philosophies, ruling out God, making humanitarian promises, are

twenty ²elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faees,
 17 and worshipped God, Saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy
 18 great power, and hast reigned. And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth.
 19 ³And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ⁴ark of his testament: and there were ⁵lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.

but nurslings of Satan's bosom. The new order will not be developed from the old but will come down from heaven.

II. The destruction of earth's destroyers—usurpers, tyrants, liars and persecutors shall be overthrown by the violence of their own deeds; the devil shut up in hell and death and the grave extinguished.

III. Judgment of the dead. Full justice is never done in this world; beyond is the invincible throne of God. All inequalities will be adjusted and God's administration forever vindicated.

IV. The giving of rewards. Ours is the religion of the cross, no true follower of Jesus escapes it here. True piety never becomes popular. Our compensation is coming; we shall be present either as the victims of divine wrath or as the friends of Jesus.

Manifestations attending the sounding of the last trump were ¹I. Voices in heaven—Tremendous climax of celestial interest; even Eternity breaks its quiet.

²II. The Elders already have their crowns but they join in the thanksgiving of the others.

³III. The temple of the Jews was but a copy of this Temple. Oneness of worship in both worlds is restored. Mists begin to lift from sacred things; the holy to disclose.

⁴IV. The ark was lost when the temple at Jerusalem was destroyed by the Chaldeans (II. Kings 25:10), and was missing in the second temple. There is a Jewish tradition which tells that Jeremiah had taken the ark and all that the Most Holy Place contained, and concealed them in a cave at Mt. Sinai, where they will be found and restored to the temple in the day of the Messiah. Its appearance here does not indicate a profane exposure; it is rather a hallowed revelation. All of God's promises and engagements may be considered as treasured here. Its appearance is a token of the recurrence of all the Divine Power which accompanied the ark in ancient times, only now on a sublimer scale.

⁵V. When God revealed Himself at Sinai He warned the people to beware. Now He is about to break thru upon them. As the ark brings joy to God's people so the convulsions of Nature herald His indignation toward the wicked.

A Parenthesis. XII-XIV.

The Woman and The Dragon. XII.

1 AND there appeared a ¹great wonder
in heaven; a ²woman ³clothed with
the sun, and ⁴the moon under her feet,
and upon her head ⁵a crown of twelve
2 stars: And ⁶she being with child cried,
⁷'travailing in birth, and pained to be
3 delivered. And there appeared ⁸another
wonder in heaven; and behold a
⁹great red dragon, having ¹⁰seven
heads and ¹¹ten horns, and seven
4 crowns upon his heads. And ¹²his tail
drew the third part of the stars of
heaven, and ¹³did cast them to the
earth: and the dragon stood before
the woman which was ready to be
delivered, ¹⁴for to devour her child as
5 soon as it was born. And ¹⁵she brought
forth a man child, who was to rule
all nations with a rod of iron: and
her child was caught up unto God,
6 and ¹⁶to his throne. And the woman
fled into the wilderness, where she
hath a place prepared of God, that
they should feed her there a thousand
two hundred *and* threescore days.

This parenthetic passage seems to be a restatement, in symbolic form, of the facts already given in the Rapture and The Tribulation.

¹To such students as are inclined to treat the entire Apocalypse as a mysticism incapable of intelligible and sincere interpretation we would call attention to the fact that here the writer expressly states that he is giving a symbol, a "wonder," indicating that this passage is not to be taken literally but to be studied as a marvel, something more than itself. Evidently John considers the main progression of the book to be treated soberly and faithfully as any other scriptural prophecy and where he employs a symbolic method he tells us so.

There are three very striking women in this book. We have the first one, the sun-clad woman, here. The second, the scarlet woman, is introduced in Chapt. 17 and the third, the Lamb's bride in Ch. 19. We come now to a study of the Sun Clad Woman.

²Who is she? There are many theories here. Some high authorities start with the proposition that the man child which is born, must be none other than Christ, hence this Woman must be ancient Israel, or her representative, from whom, according to the flesh, Christ came. Others hold very nearly the same view—that the Woman is Judaism from which Christianity sprang. Neither of these views are satisfactory to the writer, for in the first place we cannot accept the proposition concerning the identity of the man-child. It is exceedingly significant that the phrase translated *man-child*, in the original is neuter gender, not meaning a masculine individual but referring rather to the genus. Hence sex is not the thought to emphasize; the real force of the expression is rather an emphasis of characteristic qualities of masculinity,—power and vigor, the stuff that warriors and conquerors are made of. This man-child is to rule all nations with a rod of iron—this is promised to the true Church—See Chapt. II:26, 27. Dan. 7:27. Matt. 2:6. Our conviction is that the Church is two-fold, visible and invisible; that the child typifies the true, invisible church within the body; and that the Woman typifies the visible church which is recognized by men, having its place as an organized agency in history. We believe the woman to be the collective body of the Church: not the Jewish church exclusively, nor the Christian Church exclusively, but the church of the living God: one glorious whole, the figure complete.

³This woman is in the way of motherhood. She is the creation from the second Adam by the Holy Spirit as Eve came from the first Adam. No other figure could so richly set

7 ¹⁶And there was war in heaven: ¹⁷Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and
 8 his angels. And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in
 9 heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the ¹⁸Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast
 10 out with him. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them
 11 before our God day and night. And they overcame him by ¹⁹the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and ²⁰they loved not their lives unto the death. Therefore rejoice, *ye* heavens, and *ye* that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he
 12 hath but a short time. And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the ²¹woman which brought forth the man *child*.

forth the mystic union of Christ with the Church. The lesson here regarding the divine mission of the Church is one of supreme importance to our own generation. No matter how many nor how great her works of humanitarianism and education may be, when she ceases to be pregnant with the salvation of souls, the superhuman new birth, she is utterly barren and desolate. The church is intended of God for the work of begetting babes in Christ and the perfecting of saints, for the carrying and bringing forth of a royal seed of God to inherit His kingdom. Ministers and people may forget their calling; they may even persecute those who in sadness and tears are trying to fulfill the mission; but it is still true that *the church* is "with child", nurturing the God-begotten seed for the glorious birth hour of the future. Within the visible church, in spite of her defections and hypocrisies, there is the invisible body, spiritual princes maturing for birth to eternal rulership.

⁴The woman is magnificently arrayed, she is clothed with the sun—i. e., light. The church is an illuminated body. It has the light and is also a light giver. The church has produced the brightest lights of all the ages. The true church includes the holiest souls of the human race. Light is the garment of God.

⁵The woman is victorious in her position—the moon is under her feet. The sun is the king of the day; the moon is the empress of the night, symbolic of the kingdom of darkness. The church small, weak, feminine, despised, pursued by the great destroyer, is still victorious. God turns her calamities to triumph.

⁶The woman is royal in rank and dignity, she wears a crown of twelve stars, regal gems, symbolic of dominion. True Christians are kings and priests unto God; and the true church, Jehovah's queen, is the mother of eternity's kings.

⁷The woman is in travail. This is anguish but not the pain of persecution. Persecution is from hell, but this agony is the fruit of love, the crown of womanhood—maternity. The grand birth hour, the Rapture of the saints, is still ahead. I Cor. 15:52.

⁸Here we find a second symbolism. We come now to a study of the dragon.

⁹He is great—every characteristic hugely magnified. He is formidable and terrible, a malignant monster; great in the daring presumption of his ambition to wrest creation from the dominion of its Maker. The genius of Satan is inferior only to that of eternal uncreated mind—the God-head. His attitude toward the woman with child—the church is always that of antagonism. This has been the attitude from the beginning. The battle

is as old as man. The persistent antagonism between good and evil has been present in every generation and has been fought over every individual soul since the days of Eden.

Who is the dragon? Parallel with the history of the church in this world, there runs another, a mighty antagonizing power with which the church must contend and one which is ever set to hinder her progress and destroy her hope. The dragon—a symbolic creature—is pictured as a terrible serpentine creature, clawed, armed at every point and delighting to attack, terrify and devour. The dragon is used by this inspired writer to portray the devil in his entirety—his character, career and manifestations. The symbolic dragon stands for a very real being. There is a devil as real as the church.

¹⁰ His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven. Many of the best authorities believe this to be a reference to his rebellion in the early hour of eternity suggestive of the magnitude of his following; the stars symbolizing the angelic host that became apostate under his leadership.

¹¹ Cast to the earth—plucked out of their setting as stars, dethroned and debased.

¹² Seven heads—governing power. Crowned—political rulership. The dragon is an imperial personage. The number seven—dispensational fulness: the dominions of this world through this entire dispensation are under the power of the dragon. Satan has usurped the political sovereignty of this world. Some good men appear here and there, and some good is accomplished now and then but the political systems of this earth are controlled by the devil. He is the prince of this world, John 12:31; John 14:30; John 16:11; II. Cor. 4:4. He offered the kingdoms of this world to Jesus Christ, if He would fall down and worship him, and this was not an idle taunt.

¹³ Ten horns—The weapons of animals: the power to injure, wound, afflict. The number ten—worldly completeness in the evil sense. All tyrannies, wars and oppression that have gored and destroyed humanity are from the dragon. His color—red—fire and blood; fierce, murderous. (John 8:44; I. Peter 5:8.) He is the seducer and destroyer. All death is traceable to him; all carnage, misery and sorrow; every blight of human happiness and peace; all fiery passion and violence; all perversion and degeneration of God's image in man; every broken heart, every curse, every uncleanness or vice; all calamities have their source in Satan.

¹⁴ The attitude of the dragon toward the child is that of special hatred. He is more bent upon destroying the child than the woman. The triumph of the invisible church is

- 14 And to the woman were given ²²two wings of a great eagle, that she might ²³fly into the ²⁴wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from
- 15 the face of the serpent. ²⁵And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the
- 16 flood. ²⁶And the earth helped the woman; and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his
- 17 mouth. And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

Satan's defeat. If he could destroy this child—the regenerated and holy purchase of Jesus' blood, or could thwart his exaltation to dominion, this would satisfy the murderous heart of the dragon.

¹⁵ The most interesting event in this wonderful chapter is the birth of the child. Many local and partial theories have been advanced but they are unsatisfactory, because this birth—manifestation—is not consummated until the end of this dispensation. (Ch. 4.) The time is very significant. It is the opening of the judgment period which is the birth period for the saints; the completion of the bride; the translation of the true church; the putting on of immortality; the receiving of rewards. This child is caught away to God. He is born a king. Rev. 4:21. Acts 23:10. Jude 23.

¹⁶ Following the account of the birth we are told that there was war in heaven. At this point Dr. Blanchard raises the question—Where is Satan? (See verse 10.) And calls attention to the truth that even now Satan has free access to the very presence of God. The scriptures bear out the fact that as in Job's time, so on to the sounding of the last trump Satan is permitted to come with the sons of God and go in and out from His presence. As his names signify, his desire and constant employment is to seduce mortals to sin, to accuse them even when they have not yielded to his allurements; and failing in this, to do as he did with Job, afflict and torment them. "Thousands of godly men and women to-day are suffering as Job did, under Satanic assaults on the lives of friends, on their property, interests, and on their physical frames; and Satan is telling them that their sufferings are caused by their sins; whereas these sufferings come, not because of their sins, but because of the malice and wrath of Satan against people who are living holy lives in hard places. There are a host of the Lord's people who do not understand the deadly character of this enemy with whom they have to do, and this ignorance results in spiritual depression and a failure to obtain victory"—Blanchard.

¹⁷ The forces marshalled for this war in the aerial spaces are Michael and his angels versus the dragon and his angels. Many commentators teach that Michael is not Christ, but one of the chief princes, an arch angel. Christ is the king—Michael is the general conducting the campaign. Michael is the leader of the faithful angels as Satan is the leader of the rebellious angels. This war is in behalf of the child born of the mystic woman. It is for the establishment of the reign of Christ and His saints.

The Occasion of the Conflict—the resurrection and glorification of the saints. The dominion of death is broken: mortality is swallowed up in life.

The Nature of the Battle—the beings engaged, are all spiritual; the region is the air. There is no slaughter nor bloodshed. It is a war in which hellish intelligence, inflamed with desperate hate, is pitted against the reason and right of heaven. Satan in his old character, as seducer and accuser, is trying to pervert the truth and make wrong seem right. He is denying the right of the saints to be glorified, trying to accuse them of hypocrisy and to make out that they are unworthy of this exaltation. To establish this would make God inconsistent with His own holiness. But the victory of the saints comes “by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony.” This is the everlasting fortress of the saints.

The Issue of the Engagement,—Satan is defeated. He might have known that he would not prevail, but his depravity, pride and malice inflamed his brazen hope and blinded his reason. He may deceive man but he will never impose his subtleties on heaven. With his defeat comes the revelation of his true character—his devilishness. Stunned and repulsed by the merit of the Blood he is pursued to utter rout. Then all heaven is filled with rejoicing. It is one of the gladdest moments of all time. (Verses 12-17.) Satan has received his final ejection from heaven. His original revolt began in heaven and his final overthrow begins there. He is now confined to earth and the true church having been caught up to be with Christ leaves the earth a victim to the malignity of Satan. This is clearly the “Tribulation Period.”

¹⁸ The devil—never plural in scripture. It applies to *one being*. All others are his angels, his confederates, subject to his imperious will. Demons are a lower order, the plebians of his kingdom.

¹⁹ By—on account of the Blood.

²⁰ They loved not—“They carried their *not-love* of their life even unto death.” Alford.

²¹ The Woman—the visible church—remains on the earth after the child is caught up—this clearly teaches that all professed Christians will not be taken. These who are left, together with those who repent and turn to God amid the sorrows of the tribulation, will comprise the woman and her seed.

²² The original has the definite article—the two wings. Compare Exod. 19:4; Deut. 32:11; Psalms 36:7. I Kings 18:46.

²³ Why does she fly? Because she cannot live without it. It is the period of the Beast dominion. He is reigning at Jerusalem. He has his power and authority from the devil and he embodies the dragon's rage against the woman. But God does not forsake the woman. She is given two wings, the special and direct help of God. The sore trial is not lifted, but miraculous assistance is given.

²⁴ The woman flies to the desert. Israel of old fled to the desert wilderness of Sinai from the Egyptians. Elijah fled to this wilderness from Jezebel, and hither the Jews fled from the Syrian Kings in the Maccabean period. The woman is nourished by the same God who sent manna to the Hebrew fugitives and the angel to feed Elijah. Her hunger indicates her necessity and her utter helplessness. But like the multitude who followed Jesus into the desert she is fed. Here she remains during the reign of the beast.

²⁵ But even yet the dragon's rage continues against her. The flood—waters like a river—is symbolic. It is probably a destroying army like Pharaoh and the Egyptian host that followed the Hebrews.

²⁶ "The earth helped the woman." Ex. 15:11, 12; Num. 16:31-33; Luke 21:25, 26. This may signify a terrific earthquake. Still the wrath of the dragon is unabated. He turns back to make war on every individual left who will not deny Christ. This is the time of the Two Witnesses, and any who accept their testimony are included in the final wrath of the dragon.

*The Two Beasts: Anti-Christ and The
False Prophet.*

CHAPTER XIII.

A Study of the First Beast.

XIII:1-10.

1 AND I stood upon the sand of the sea,
and saw a ¹beast ²rise up out of ³the
sea, ⁴having seven heads and ⁵ten
horns, and upon his horns ⁶ten crowns,
and upon his heads the name of blas-
2 phemy. And the beast which I saw

Here again is diversity among commentators as to details of interpretation, but a general harmony in the conclusion that the first beast is the anti-Christ. There is a Cain for Abel; a Babylon for Jerusalem; an anti-Christ for Christ.

¹ The word here is properly translated *beast*. It is not the same as *living creatures*.

² John sees the beast *coming up*.

³ The sea—Some authorities believe this sea to be the Gentile world, others confine it to apostate Christendom.

⁴ The manifested Anti-Christ is the ultimate development of the serpent's seed. The dragon of chapter 12, the old serpent, is a spirit; and in order to dominate the affairs of earth and work the devastation which his wrath demands, he must have a human agent through whom to work his blasphemies and deceit.

was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as *the feet* of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: ¹and the dragon gave him his power, and ²his seat, and great authority. And I saw one of his heads as it were ³wounded to death; ⁴and his deadly wound was healed: ⁵and all the world ⁶wondered after the beast. And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, "Who is like unto the beast? who is able to ⁷make war with him? And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue ⁸forty *and* two months. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, ⁹and them that dwell in heaven. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, ¹⁰and nations. ¹¹And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of ¹²the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. If any ¹³man have an ear, let him hear. ¹⁴He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.

⁵This is a symbolic presentation of the political sovereignty of the world. This beast has a throne and controls buying and selling—commerce. Some of the best authorities teach that this monster includes Daniel's four beasts—(Dan. 7:3-7) kings—rising out of the same agitated sea. This establishes his earthly sovereignty. This beast is the final consummation of the political world power in its last phase. When he goes back to perdition earthly administrations will have ended forever.

⁶These crowns are diadems,—the mark of regal dominion. We cannot agree with those who teach that the administration of anti-Christ is merely an impersonal system. We believe the beast is an individual ruler. He is upheld by ten governments but his is one administration. His time of rulership is not long enough to suggest successive reigns. He is worshipped as a god, therefore he is a person and not merely an empire. His statue is made; he is an emperor; he has a number—"the number of a man." He is called "the man of sin" "that wicked." He is finally damned. Rev. 17:11; 20:10. He continues to exist and suffer; therefore he is a man, not merely a system.

⁷The source of the authority and power of anti-Christ is clear. It is from the dragon. Satan has at last found the one who accepts the offer of the kingdoms of this world, which the holy Son of Man spurned. But Satan's conditions are the same, anti-Christ and his subjects shall worship the dragon.

⁸Wounded—slain. The same word in the Greek as that where we read of *the Lamb as it had been slaughtered*. In both cases there had been actual death; and in both, revival. "The one is a mocking counterpart of the other"—Vincent.

⁹He is a supernatural person. As a power, he rises out of the convulsed sea of peoples; as a person, he comes out of the abyss—the under world, the abode of demons. To hail from Hades he must be either a dead man raised from the dead or an evil spirit getting possession of a living man. The early Christians believed Nero to be the Anti-Christ and that he would return to earth in the last day as "the man of sin", either Satanically resurrected or acting through a spirit-medium completely under his control. According to verse 3, one of his heads has been "slain to death." This would seem to indicate a man who has undergone literal death. Whether he comes back by resurrection or obsession, his death would be negated. Greek scholars tell us the original text carries the idea of violent death and resurrection.

¹⁰He is an exceedingly fascinating person; the whole world wonders at and follows

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after him with the intensest admiration and homage. The pride of Babylon was the majesty of her sovereign splendor; of Medo-Persia, the towering prowess of her military power; of Greece, the supremacy of her classic art, the elegance and perfection of her language, and her heroism for liberty; of Rome, the iron strength of her laws, her marshalled discipline and her conception of justice. When all are combined in one how will mankind idolize the emperor! Satan—anti-God—anticipating the manifestation of Christ, in his heavenly majesty, crowns the anti-Christ with his hell-derived majesty and glory and men untaught of God will idolize him.

¹¹ This is a parody on a similar ascription to God. See Isa. 40:18 and 25. Psa. 113:5; Micah. 7:18; Chap. 18:18.

¹² John here brings out the enormity of the blasphemy by specifying God's holy name and dwelling place. But "them that dwell in heaven" seem to be his particular blasphemy. Anti-Christ, prompted by the dragon, is a consummate persecutor, making war with the saints and the two witnesses and the woman. Even the Beast is conscious of the rapture of the Man-Child and his blasphemy here is the vent of the dragon's wrath because of his defeat in the heavens.

¹³ This beast is the consummate antagonist and supplanter of everything divine. The seven heads (ch. 17) are seven kings; five fallen, one existing at the time of this prophecy, and the last yet to come. If we count Rome, the one existing in John's time, number six, there are five great empires preceding;—(5) Grecian, (4) Medo-Persian, (3) Chaldean, (2) Egyptian, (1) Old Assyrian. In all of these the deification of the emperor was the religion of the state. The anti-Christ is the consummation of this time. He will magnify himself above God. II Thess. 2:4. He asserts himself anti-God, anti-Christ, anti-Spirit, abolishing all worship of these.

¹⁴ Literal translation—The Lamb that hath been slain from the laying down of the foundation of the world.

¹⁵ The thought of this passage is that they who persecute the saints or lay hands upon the work of God's children will suffer that which they inflict upon any one of the Lord's anointed. And John adds—"Here," that is, in this thought that God is the Righteous Judge who will judge the earth, "is the patience and faith of the saints."

*A Study of The Second Beast.**XIII:11-18.*

- 11 And I beheld another beast ¹coming up out of the earth; and he had ²two horns like a ³lamb, and he spake as a
 12 ⁴dragon. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and ⁵causeth the ⁶earth and ⁷them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was
 13 healed. And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh ⁸fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight
 14 of men, And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by *the means of* those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an ⁹image to the beast, which had the wound by a
 15 sword, and did live. And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image
 16 of the beast should be killed. And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a ¹⁰mark in their right hand,
 17 or in their foreheads. And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

The generally accepted interpretation of the second beast is that he is the false prophet whose ministry accompanies the reign of anti-Christ.

Every political leader has needed a religious leader to aid and abet his administration. Pharoah had his magicians; Ahab, his Jezebel and her herd of heathen priests, etc. The religious instinct is the most powerful element in humanity; it may be perverted but it cannot be ignored. No empire could stand without its aid.

Christ is Prophet, Priest and King; anti-Christ attempts to meet all three. True religion recognizes the Trinity. The devil counterfeits all three persons of the Godhead—anti-God, the dragon, anti-Christ, the son of perdition who receives his throne from his father Satan, after having his death stroke negatived; anti-Holy Spirit, the two horned beast, the false prophet proceeding from the dragon-father and dragon-son. These three are one administration.

The same principles of interpretation apply to this latter portion of the chapter as were employed in the earlier portion dealing with the anti-Christ. We believe the false prophet is an individual and not merely a system, for he is later cast into hell.

¹He comes out of the earth. As the first beast comes from the sea—political agitation, the second is from the earth, more stable—religious elements. His doctrines will be evolved from the religious systems of God-denying men. (Psa. 10:15.) There is abundant material in the world at the present time, for his creed. (I Sam. 28:13.) “The under world”—some commentators attempt to identify this beast with Judas Iscariot. As God brings back Moses and Elijah, His two witnesses, so it is suggested Satan may bring back Nero and Judas, both suicides, who at the end do not die but are cast alive into the lake of fire. Judas is called the son of perdition. This may signify more than his damnation. It suggests that he is begotten of hell.

²The two horns have no diadems; he is not a king. This figure suggests the gentleness of a domestic animal. The symbolism is taken by some commentators to be the two fold power—naturalism and supernaturalism—which is the foundation upon which religions rest. It must be borne in mind that all supernaturalism is not of God. Satan is a supernatural being, having supernatural power. The false prophet will be a scientist and a spiritualist. It furnishes food for thought to the serious minded that leading scientists are making modern psychology furnish a scientific cloak for the work of spirit mediums. The false prophet will claim to be “The absolute apostle of universal wisdom.”

18 ¹¹Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: ¹²for it is the number of a man; and his number *is* Six hundred threescore *and* six.

³Lamb-like in that he assumes only the place of a spiritual leader, 'but dragon-like in that his claims usurp the office and work of the Holy Spirit. His power and presumption in compelling the worship of men is from the dragon.

⁵It is significant that this word *causeth* is used eight times in regard to the ministry of the false prophet. It would seem to indicate that the second beast is the executor of hell's administration.

⁶The earth here is mentioned as distinct from the inhabitants. This may have no important significance, but some authorities suggest a reference to the abode of depraved spirits.

⁷The false prophet reduces the administration of the first beast to a system of worship, establishing the universal worship of anti-Christ as the supreme deity.

⁸This is probably literal fire. Satan had power over lightning in the days of Job. Job 1:16.

Let us pause for a glance at the condition of the times preceding the false prophet.

(II Tim. 3:1-6; 4:3, 4.) A great apostasy preceded by a blatant scientism and naturalism which dogmatically denies the doctrines of faith is foretold. Also a demonic spiritism which denies Christ and the authority of the scriptures. (II Peter 3:3, 4; I Tim. 4:1-3.) With this apostasy, instability in political affairs, confusion in the social order, a weakening of law, and a general unmanageableness and corruption in everything. (Matt. 24:27-39.) The patience of God is well nigh wearied out. Judgment is begun. The Holy Spirit insulted begins to withdraw. The saints have gone, and men having spurned the mercy of God are given over to believe a lie.

⁹This expression—image of the beast—occurs ten times in the Apocalypse. There was some little discussion among the Church Fathers as to the force of the word *image*, whether it means merely a likeness that might imply only a resemblance, or the fuller content of the word carrying the thought of a veritable representation. The latter judgment seems to have the preponderance of authority.

¹⁰This practice may have been suggested by the custom of branding slaves. Some monarchs branded their soldiers. Paul applies the word for these brands (Gal. 6:17) to the marks of Christ's service which he bears in his body. The method of marking by a mystic number was generally practiced among the ancients, both pagan and Jew. This mystic mark signified a name. The mark here referred to as given in the ancient

manuscripts is made up of two Greek letters which stand for Christ—XS'—with a third, the figure of a crooked serpent between them, so that the sense is *the Messiah of Satan*. No one can buy or sell without this seal of damnation upon them. Have we not a hint of this very thing in our own time when men born on our own soil are discriminated against in labor markets because their skins are black and they do not carry the card of certain organizations?

Let us review a little more fully the means employed by the false prophet.

1. Miracles. The test of a miracle is its supernaturalness, the test of its source is the doctrine for which it is wrought. There is a supernaturalism in the world against God as truly as there is a supernatural force which is of God. (Read:—Ex. 7, 8, 9; Deut. 13:1-5; Matt. 24:24.) The false prophet uses miracles to counterfeit the proof of Christ's Messiahship. Verse 13 speaks of his power over fire. Satan especially needed the miracle of fire to offset the influence of the two witnesses. The purpose of this miracle is to prove to deluded men the claims of the false prophet for himself. He next points to the supernatural character of the man he would have worshipped, anti-Christ, and the main point he emphasizes is that he has been wounded unto death and the death stroke has been healed. His purpose is to offset Christ's obedience unto death and His resurrection which gives Him the supreme place in glory where the song is unto "the Lamb that was slain". Men who spurned Christ's propitiation for their sins are now deluded by this monster.

2. Idolatry—the besetting abomination and defilement of the ages. A statue of the beast, anti-Christ is set up in the temple of Jehovah. (Dan. 9:27; 11:45; Matt. 24:15; II Thess. 2:4.) It is the worship of the man himself. The image is given power to speak. (Habakkuk 2:19.) The beast is now systematically deified and devil rule comes into full effect. There will still be a few "elect ones" who cannot accept the new worship. From the mouth of the image by the authority of the beast, comes the command that these shall be killed. Relentless persecution becomes the law of the state. "In the name of democracy comes dictatorship; in the name of freedom comes universal enslavement; in the name of reason trampling upon revelation, comes idolatry; in the name of liberalism disdaining allegiance to any creed, comes bloody despotism crowned by the base worship of a baser man." The religion of Christ has its holy sacraments, its mark

of baptismal consecration. The false prophet travesties these by the brand or mark of the beast. Every man receiving this brand becomes the chattel of hell.

¹¹This expression is a challenge emphasizing the closing declaration of the chapter.

¹²Many combinations have been made in the effort to read from this mystic number the name of the anti-Christ. It was the favorite attempt of some of the early Fathers to make it read the names of the rulers of the pagan Roman empire, especially Nero Caesar. It is enough, however, that we have here the evil number—6—multiplied, indicating evil in its final manifestation and intensity.

The 144,000 Again Introduced.

XIV:1-5.

CHAPTER XIV.

- 1 AND I looked, and, lo, ¹a Lamb ²stood on the mount Sion, and with him a hundred forty *and* four thousand, ³having his Father's name ⁵written in
2 their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard ⁴the voice of harpers harping with their harps:
3 And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred *and* forty *and* four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth.
4 These are ⁷they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.
⁶These were redeemed from among men, *being* the first fruits unto God
5 and to the Lamb. And ⁸in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault ⁹before the throne of God.

This passage is in direct contrast with the preceding chapter. It is a counterpart of the same history. The beast versus the Lamb. The worshipers of the beast having his mark versus the followers of the Lamb having His mark in their foreheads. The moral system of the beast, harlotry, versus the virgin purity of this company. The slavery of the beast's followers versus this company redeemed from thralldom by the Lamb. The beasts and their followers go into perdition versus the followers of the Lamb in the presence of the Throne, the living ones and the elders. Falseness, and lies in the mouth of the beast and his train versus the truthfulness of this company in whose mouths there is no guile. The number of the beast—three sixes—the bad number intensified, versus the combination of twelves the sacred number of completeness. This company is contemporaneous with the beast, but victorious over him. This 144,000 is the same company we met in chapter 7. Those in chapter 7 and these have the mark, the seal of the Lamb in their foreheads. They are Hebrews. Their place Mount Zion, suggests the throne of David. They are supernaturally sustained while under the rule of the beast. This account completes the record of chapter 7. There we see them in their earthly relations and peculiar consecration. Here we see them in the enjoyment of their heavenly reward. This is taken as a proof by some authorities, that from the opening of the sixth seal to the revelation of the "man of sin" no more time elapses than the ordinary length of a human life.

¹Read *The* Lamb.

²Better form—*standing*.

³A better rendering is—His name and the name of His Father.

‘More accurately—The voice which I heard was as the voice of harpers singing with their harps.

The Chief Characteristics of the 144,000 are as follows,—

(a). ⁵ A true and conspicuous confession;—the mark of the Lamb is in their foreheads. Rom. 10:10.

(b). ⁶ Their unworldliness;—redeemed from the earth—withdrawn from it with heavenly promises. Redeemed from men—severed from this world in fellowship and life.

(c). ⁷ Their pureness;—not celibacy, but pureness from the corruptness of anti-Christ. The chastity of spiritual virginity versus anti-Christ's harlotry.

(d). ⁸ Their truthfulness;—true in testimony and in life. They have the true faith; they cherish it with a true heart; they exemplify it in a true life; they are the children of truth in an untrue world.

Their Reward. They are blameless but they are not the highest order of saints. They sing in the presence of the living ones and elders but no word is said about the 144,000 having crowns or thrones. There are many mansions in the Father's house, many ranks of saints. These are virgins. They come in after the bride is complete, but they have the glorious honor of God's approval for their faithfulness. They have a song exclusively their own; their experience during the tribulation period cannot be shared even by the living ones and the elders; as angels cannot join the song of the redeemed, so no other rank of saints can join this song. They have the distinction which is peculiarly their own; they stand with the Lamb on Mount Zion. To be with the Lamb as against the beast is victory. To be on Mount Zion is a special relation. It represents the throne of David, promised in prophecy to be restored and rebuilt. It looks over into the new earth. (Isa. 35:10, Jer. 3:17; Isa. 24:33; Psalms. 2.) God is not yet done with the Jew. There is reliable authority for the interpretation of prophecy to the effect that the Lamb will take possession of the city where He was crucified and the 144,000 will be with Him in that administration. They are the first fruits to God and the Lamb; not the first fruits of all the saved but the first fruit from this peculiar harvest; the first fruit from the Jews following the present, “the times of the Gentiles”. What the living ones and elders are to the church universal, these are to the restored children of Abraham. They are witnesses for the Son during the darkest days of Jacob's trouble.

*The Four Angel Messengers Give
Warning of the Fall of Babylon.*

XIV:6-20.

- 6 And I saw another ¹angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the ²everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and
7 people. Saying with a loud voice, ³Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the foun-
8 tains of waters. ⁴And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive *his* mark in his
10 forehead, or in his hand, The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out ⁵without mixture into ⁶the cup of his indignation; ⁷and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence
11 of the Lamb: ⁸And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the
12 mark of his name. Here is the patience of the saints: here *are* they that keep the commandments of God,
13 and the faith of Jesus. And I heard

¹ God's word cannot be silenced. Dr. Seiss says when anti-Christ has hushed human heralds and the church has been driven to the wilderness, angels will become preachers, mid-heaven their pulpit and all nations their auditors. The fact that an angel in mid-heaven is doing the preaching is proof that it is no longer this present dispensation but the time of judgment. It is one of the last calls to an apostate world. (Gal. 1:8.)

² This word in the original includes more than the thought of the mere duration of time. It is applied to that of which time is not a measure. Combined with Gospel it marks the likeness to Him whose being is not bounded by time—Vincent.

³ This as against the worship of anti-Christ.

⁴ This is an announcement on the eve of Babylon's ruin; a warning, a final effort of mercy in the face of judgment severity. The word *fallen* in the original is in the prophetic aorist tense emphasizing the certainty of the fall. The repetition of the phrase *is fallen* is taken by some commentators to refer to the two-fold nature of Babylon, first as a city which becomes the center of the world's commerce, and second as the system and spirit of commercialism and worldliness—Babylonianism.

⁵ Poured out unmixed. This metaphor is taken from the universal custom of mixing water with wine for drinking. The meaning is clear—the undiluted wrath of God. (See Psa. 75:8.)

⁶ This figure—the cup—is a familiar expression in scripture; “my cup runneth over”; “I will take the cup of salvation.” “If it be possible let this cup pass from Me.” It means portion. So the wicked will find their portion in Almighty indignation.

⁷ This is an announcement of hell—the eternal doom for the abettors of the Beast. This one passage would be sufficient to establish proof of the reality of a place of torment. The burning of brimstone from very ancient times has been known to be a powerful disinfectant and fumigation. Can there be a suggestion in this figure that the pollution of sin is so deadly that God mingles brimstone with the fire to purify the universe and cleanse all creation from “the least and last remains of sin”?

⁸ In this connection read Isa. 34:8-10.

⁹ Blessed in that they may rest, etc. This is what the followers of the Beast can never know. To the saints, no matter what their sufferings have been, peace is sure.

¹⁰ Their works which involved weariness and sorrow.

a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, ¹¹Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, ⁹that they may rest from their ¹⁰labours; and their works do follow them.

14 And I looked, and behold a ¹²white cloud, and upon the cloud *one* sat like unto ¹³the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown and in his
15 hand ¹⁴a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of ¹⁷the temple, ¹⁶crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest ¹⁵of the
16 earth is ¹⁶ripe. And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; ^{18*}and the earth was reaped.
17 And another angel came out of ¹⁹the temple which is in heaven, he also
18 having a sharp sickle. And ²⁰another angel came out from the altar, which had power over ²¹fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are
19 ²²fully ripe. And the ²³angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast *it* into the ²⁴great winepress of the wrath of
20 God. And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of ²⁵a thousand and six hundred furlongs.

¹¹ Death, to a good man in any age is a greater blessing than disaster, but this will be truer of this tribulation period than of any other.

¹² White—like lightning—symbolic of the purest and hottest wrath of God toward evil. When Christ is mentioned on a cloud we note that the work in hand is judgment.

¹³ It belongs to Jesus Christ to reap the earth and rid it of its hellish seed. The man of sin is destroyed only by the manifestation of the Savior (II Thess. 2:8).

¹⁴ The instrument for the reaping of the wicked.

We come, in the closing verses, under the crying of the last two angel messengers of this passage, to the two visions, one of the harvest and one of the vintage. These visions give a summary of the administration of Divine wrath. The details follow in the succeeding chapters. For brevity and expressive imagery, these visions are perhaps the most wonderful in the Apocalypse.

¹⁵ It is the harvest of the wicked, not of the church. The living ones, the elders, the man-child, the one hundred forty four thousand have all been gathered before this time. This is the gathering of the tares—the harvest of misery and woe. Jer. 51:33; Joel 3:11-16. This is the direct consequence of the angel's proclamation of the fall of Babylon. Isa. 27:11.

¹⁶ Literally—over-ripe.

¹⁷ Temple—more properly *sanctuary*. The temple seems to be on earth as distinct from the temple of verse 17, which is in heaven.

¹⁸ This angel cry seems to voice the desire of those who have kept the faith of Christ in spite of the horrors of the reign of anti-Christ. (Compare with Gen. 4:10; Rev. 18:5.) It is the cry of righteous indignation attesting the righteousness of the judgment of the wicked.

^{18*} "*The Earth was Reaped*"—tremendous words! It includes all the disasters that come from the pouring out of the bowls of wrath. It is the cutting down and sweeping away of anti-Christ and Babylon, the adulteress, and the final termination of the present order of things. Matt. 13:39.

¹⁹ Compare with Heb. 10:23, 24. Christ is now in this temple as our High Priest during this, our present dispensation.

Following the Grain Harvest comes the Grape Harvest. The fruit of this vintage is the grapes of Sodom, the depravities of the centuries heading up and ripening to matur-

THE REVELATION

ity. The vine of the earth versus the vine of heaven. Christ, the true vine and His saints, the branches—anti-Christ and his followers, the vine of the earth. Deut. 32:32, 33.

²⁰ This angel seems to be the spirit in charge of the altar fire which cries for vengeance against anti-Christ.

²¹ It is the fire of Divine Justice demanding the destruction of God's enemies.

²² They have reached the highest point of ripeness.

²³ The word *angel* here is used as a title signifying the mission, not the nature, for this is the same Son of Man mentioned in verse 14, who thrust in the sickle for the grain harvest.

²⁴ Fuller details regarding the wine-press are given in Chaps. 16 and 19. This figure is misunderstood and misapplied, as much perhaps, as any expression in scripture. It is a war scene. It refers to the gathering of armies for the portentous battle of the Great Day, when God's enemies are to be crushed, as grapes in a vat. It should never be used in reference to the sorrows or trials that come to a Christian. The seat of the wine-press is probably the Holy Land. Armageddo is the valley of Megiddo in the midst of which lies Jerusalem. Here the Midianites and Amelekites were routed before Gideon and his three hundred, and here David slew Goliath. It stretches from Bozrah on the southeast to Megiddo on the northwest. ²⁵ This is 1600 stadia (one hundred sixty miles) the area over which the blood from the wine-press flows. (Hab. 3:3-16; Isa. 34:1-8.) In the light of the terrific slaughter in the present European war we get some conception of the magnitude of such a battle. The treading of the wine-press occurs outside of Jerusalem, the Holy City, the memorial of God's salvation in the time of His fierce anger. Evidently the hosts of anti-Christ were gathered for the overthrow of Jerusalem. Thus they are brought into the wine-press. Psa. 2:2.

Return to Main Outline.

III. Christ in His Relation to Scenes of The Tribulation.

3'. The Third Woe.

a'. The Seven Vials or Bowls.

XV-XVI.

An Interlude XV:1-4.

CHAPTER XV.

- 1 AND I saw another ¹sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God.
- 2 ²And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and ³them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the
- 3 harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous *are* thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true *are* thy ways,
- 4 thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for *thou* only art holy; for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest.

The Sign of the Last Plagues.

XV:5-8.

- 5 And after that I looked, and, behold, ¹the temple of the tabernacle of ²the

Having passed the pauses of the preceding chapters we seem now to come to the continuation of the woe trumpets. We are now in the third and last woe. Commentators teach that this period follows the ministry of the two Witnesses.

¹But just as we are preparing for the rapid progress of the closing events, the writer speaks again of a sign, great in range and intensity, and marvelous in its unparalleled character. We have noted two signs already. Chapter 12 gives us The Woman and The Dragon. This is the third, The Seven Angels.

²No sooner are these angels introduced than the writer pauses to portray a vision. This is a great relief, a high light in the blackness of judgment horrors. The sea reminds of the glassy sea of chapter 4. But this one clear as crystal is mingled with fire. In this vision the sea symbolizes the vastness, purity, justness and severity of the divine punishment about to fall on the wicked. It is also a blessed vindication of the faithful ones who suffered martyrdom under the beast. These victorious ones remind us of Ex. 15:1-11. They sing the song of *Moses and of the Lamb*. These are not two distinct songs. The song of Moses is the song of the Lamb. The Old and the New Testament churches are one.

³This expression is unique. It is not so much the thought of having victory over the beast, but they have come victorious from the beast.—Vincent.

The ground covered by the visions of the harvest and the vintage is covered again with reference to particular administrations. We begin to get a view of details. It is not merely a repetition but, just as we have four gospels to give us the complete portrai-

testimony in heaven was opened:
 6 And the seven angels came out of the temple, having ¹the seven plagues, ²clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with
 7 golden girdles. And one of ³the four beasts gave unto the seven angels seven ⁴golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever.
 8 And the temple was ⁵filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power; and ⁶no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled.

The Pouring Out of The Bowls.
 XVI:1-21.

CHAPTER XVI.

1 AND I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials

ture of our Lord's earthly life, so we have these accounts of this momentous period of the end of this present world.

¹The temple—that is the sanctuary of the tabernacle. This is the innermost part, the holy of holies, the deepest center of the dwelling place of God.

²This recalls the tables of the law given to Moses, which were kept in the ark of the testimony, which, in turn, was kept in the holiest place in the tabernacle. John saw the innermost shrine of the temple in heaven opened, indicating that the hidden powers of eternity were now in active earthward administration.

³The clothing and girdles indicate that these are priest-angels. They are about to offer a great sacrifice.

⁴The same word is used for these as for the Egyptian plagues, and these will be just as literal as the Egyptian plagues were. (Exod. 19:8-12. Deut. 28:5, 27, 35.) These plagues are full of horror, but the judgment is so manifestly righteous that no holy being will question the justice of God's punishments. These plagues overlap. People will suffer from more than one at a time. They all fall upon one last evil generation.

⁵We note that here again the Living Ones have a part in the administration of judgment.

⁶These vials are not bottles. The imagery is taken from the temple service. They are bowls or censers used for burning incense. Exod. 40:34, 35; I Kings 8:10, 11. Isa. 6:1-4.

¹Compare Exod. 40:34. Psa. 18:8. Ezek. 10:2-4.

²"God cannot be approached at the moment when He is revealing Himself in all the terrors of his indignation"—Milligan.

¹Each angel, as his turn comes, withdraws.

²Fell—there *broke out*.

³Compare with the sixth plague of Egypt. (Exod. 9:8-12.) This same word occurs in some manuscripts for the scab of leprosy. (Lev. 13:18.)

⁴Clotted and putrescent. This would utterly destroy all sea life.

⁵What happened once to one river in one country, now happens to all rivers in all coun-

of the wrath of God upon the earth.
 2 And ¹the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there ²fell a noisome and grievous ³sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and *upon* them which
 3 worshipped his image. And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea; and it became as ⁴the blood of a dead *man*: and every living soul
 4 died in the sea. And the third angel poured out his vial upon the ⁵rivers and fountains of waters; and they ⁶became blood.
 5 And I heard the ⁷angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be,
 6 because thou hast judged thus. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; ⁸for they are
 7 worthy. And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous *are* thy judgments.
 8 And the fourth angel poured out his vial ⁹upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with
 9 fire. And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues: ¹⁰and they repented not to give him glory. And the fifth angel
 10 poured out his vial upon the ¹¹seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their
 11 tongues for pain. And blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented

tries. Wells, and fountains and all sources of drinking water will become polluted. A more dreadful plague can hardly be imagined.

⁶ The verb, in the original, is singular number. Literally *There came blood*.

⁷ We note here that this angel is set in charge of the waters. In Ch. 14:18 we read of the angel of the fire. This angel is amazed at the horror, but recognizes the justice of God's judgments.

⁸ Some of the most authentic manuscripts omit this phrase—for they are worthy.

⁹ This would mean that hot winds, sun-stroke, etc., would be intensified to fiery heat. (Deut. 32:24; Mal. 4:1; Isa. 24:4-13.)

¹⁰ Glorify Him by repentance.

¹¹ The darkness covers the entire kingdom of anti-Christ. (Isa. 60:2; Joel 2:1, 2, 31; Nahum 1:6, 8; Mark 13:24-25.)

They bite their tongues like people in great misery and are writhing in death. It is the madness of separation and pain. These rebellious tongues still utter blasphemy. This proves the utter fallacy of the theory that the torments of hell are remedial, or that the probation in hell would mean final salvation for all. While sin lasts, hell must last; and there are multitudes who will never repent.

¹² This is just as literal in character as are the first five plagues of this series; as literal as was the passage thru the Red Sea and the crossing of Jordan. As the drying up of the Red Sea prepared the way for the destruction of Pharaoh and his army, so this prepares the way for the ruin of the rebellious hosts, already intimated by the mention of the wine-press. (See Zech. 10:11; Jer. 51:36.)

¹³ From the beginning of history, the Euphrates has been a formidable barrier between the East and the West. It runs for eighteen hundred miles and is scarcely fordable at any point. It was the boundary of King Solomon's dominion. The drying up of the Euphrates will give the kings of the East easy access in joining the forces of anti-Christ in their final crusade. There is also a gracious side to this event in that it enables the remnant of the Israelites scattered through the East to return. The mere drying up of the river is not the full force of this plague. ¹⁴ The dragon takes advantage of this and sends out three unclean spirits to seduce the armies of the earthly kings to rebellion and ruin. (Read I Kings 22:19-38, Ahab an illustration.) These evil spirits—frogs—give to hell's trinity a universal ministry. They have the power to work Satanic miracles

12 not of their deeds. And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the ¹²great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, ¹³that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared. And I saw ¹⁴three unclean spirits like frogs *come* out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, *which* go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.

15 ¹⁵Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and ¹⁶keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame. And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue ¹⁷Armageddon.

17 And the seventh angel poured out his vial ¹⁸into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, ¹⁹It is done. And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a ²⁰great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, *and* so great.

19 And the great city was divided into three parts, and the ²¹cities of the nations fell: and ²²great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath. And ²³every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, *every*

and thus offset the divinely supernatural, stirring up a universal revolt against the incoming kingdom of the Lamb. Just who or what these seducing demons are we may not know nor can we tell the method of their work, but the text makes it clear, that they are agents of hell, froglike in that they come from the quagmire of evil and croak and defile, filling the ears of the nations with their noisy demonstration. As in chapter 9 the seven spirits of God went forth into all the earth to make up and gather together into one holy fellowship the great congregation of the sanctified so these spirits of hell go forth upon the kings and potentates of the world, to make up and gather together the grand army of the devil worshipers. History records the enthusiasm of the crusaders under the inspiration of the leadership of Peter the Hermit; what thus happened in Europe in those campaigns may readily happen throughout the world in the time of the end.

¹⁵ At this point there is a striking interjection. This warning is to the very few saints remaining who have escaped martyrdom but are still free from the brand of the beast. In 15:2 we anticipate their reward. Their distinctive characteristic is that they have endured the supreme trial of having lived under the beast. The commentators teach that this warning thrown in here at the very last indicates that Jesus will have them translated, during these last plagues. They are clearly the very last company, of the first resurrection and this completes Christ's coming for His people. These will be so obscure that this translation will be no interruption to the evil nations.

¹⁶ Edersheim tells us "During the night the captain of the Temple made his rounds. On his approach the guards had to rise and salute him in a particular manner. Any guard found asleep when on duty was beaten, or his garments were set on fire." It is evidently this custom that John borrows in this figure.

¹⁷ Mount of Megiddo. See Judges 1:27; I Kings 4:12; II Kings 9:27; Zech. 12:11; II Chron. 35:22. "Megiddo was in the plain of Esdraëlon, which has been a chosen place for encampment in every contest carried on in Palestine from the days of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Syria, unto the disastrous march of Napoleon Bonaparte from Egypt into Syria. Jews, Gentiles, Saracens, Christian Crusaders, and anti-Christian Frenchmen; Egyptians, Persians, Druses, Turks and Arabs, warriors of every nation that is under heaven, have pitched their tents on the plain of Esdraëlon, and have beheld the banners of their nation wet with the dews of Tabor and Hermon."—Clarke's Travels.

This Mount of Megiddo is known as the plain of Jezreel and extends from the Mediter-

stone about the ²⁴weight of a talent; and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.

ranean to the Jordan. The Hebrew word means to slay. See Judges 5:19. II Kings 23:29.

¹⁸ This bowl is poured out into the air, the most universal element. We have now reached the climax of judgment scenes. (Psa. 102:25, 26; Matt. 24:29; Heb. 12:25; II Pet. 3:10-12; Isa. 29:6; Psa. 50:3, 4.)

¹⁹ Direct from the judgment seat comes the announcement of the end. It reminds one of the cry of Jesus upon the cross—"It is finished."

²⁰ Compare with Isa. 2:19, 21 and Hag. 2:3-4. One can judge something of the force of this from its effects. The city—Jerusalem—is divided. One part of the city already in possession of the Lamb becomes a refuge for the Lord's own. To those who accuse us of too great literalism this passage cannot mean less than that God will shelter His own people in the midst of His wrath against the wicked.

²¹ The Gentile cities fall in utter ruin. Will not these include Rome, Paris, London, Chicago, etc.?

²² This marks the time of Babylon's fall; the particulars concerning her destruction are given later. Let us call attention to the descending scale in the woes of the cities; first, Jerusalem is partially destroyed; second, Gentile cities are ruined; third, Babylon drinks the bitterest draught of all.

²³ The material of the earth is not annihilated, but the contour will be radically changed. (Jer. 3:23-26.)

²⁴ A Jewish talent weighed 115 lbs.; an Egyptian talent, 80 lbs.; an Attic, 50 lbs.; an Antioch talent 390 lbs.; suppose the lightest one is equal to as much as a man could conveniently lift. This means hail stones as big as blocks of ice. It is hard to conceive the devastation of such a storm; but what of the moral effect! No one having the brand of anti-Christ ever repents. Such obstinacy in sin was unknown when the world was young.

(2). Fall of Babylon.

XVII-XIX:1-6.

(a). A Study of The Scarlet Woman.

XVII.

CHAPTER XVII.

1 AND there came one of the seven
angels which had the seven vials, and
talked with me, saying unto me, Come
hither; I will shew unto thee the
judgment of the great whore that
2 sitteth ¹upon many waters; With
whom the kings of the earth have
committed fornication, ²and the in-
habitants of the earth have been
made drunk with the wine of her
3 fornication. So he carried me away
in the spirit into the wilderness: and
I saw ³a woman sit upon a ⁴scarlet
coloured beast, full of names of blas-
phemy, having seven heads and ten
4 horns. And the woman was arrayed
in purple and scarlet colour, and
decked with gold and precious stones
and pearls, having a golden cup in
her hand full of abominations and
5 filthiness of her fornication: And
upon her forehead *was* a name writ-
ten, MYSTERY, ⁵BABYLON THE
GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HAR-
LOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF
6 THE EARTH. And I saw ⁶the woman
drunken with the blood of the saints,
and with the blood of the martyrs of
Jesus; and when I saw her, I won-
dered with great admiration.
7 And the angel said unto me, Where-

Before coming to a minute study of the text let us take up a comparison of the two women, the sun-clad one of Ch. XII, and this scarlet woman of Ch. XVII.

(a). Both women are mothers; the first of a son, the true church; the second of harlots and abominations.

(b). Both are splendidly arrayed; the first clothed with the sun—light from above; the second clothed with gold, purple and precious stones—all her ornaments come from below, earth and sea.

(c). Both have powerful influence in their position; the first has the moon—empress of the night—under her feet; the second has rule over the kings of the earth.

(d). Both are sufferers; against the first is the dragon who tries to devour her child, who persecutes her and all her seed with relentless hatred pursuing her into the wilderness; against the second are the ten kings who finally make her desolate, eating her flesh and burning her with plague and utter destruction.

(e). Both are very conspicuous, filling a large place in the history of the world and divine administrations.

In this connection it is interesting to note, as well, the contrasts between the two women.

(a). The first is a pure woman; the second is a harlot.

(b). The first is hated by the powers of the earth; the second is flattered and caressed by them.

(c). Where the first has sway conditions are heavenly; where the second lives it is a wilderness.

(d). The first produces masculine nobility that comes to the throne of God: the second produces effeminate impurity that calls down divine wrath.

(e). The first is supported by celestial wings: the second is carried by the dragon.

(f). The first has a crown of twelve stars—apostles and patriarchs—as her royal diadem: the second carries in her brow the name of the great destroyer and is drunken with the blood of saints.

(g). The first finally comes out in a heavenly city—the new Jerusalem—arrayed with imperishable jewels of glory: the second finally comes out in a city of this world's superlative admiration—Babylon—which goes down under divine wrath and becomes the habitation of demons.

fore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns.
 8 The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast ¹that was, and is not,
 9 and yet is. And ²here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven ³mountains, on which the
 10 woman sitteth. And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a
 11 short space. And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into
 12 perdition. And the ten horns which thou sawest are ⁴ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with
 13 the beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength
 14 unto the beast. These shall make war with the Lamb, and ⁵the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him *are* called,
 15 and chosen, and faithful. And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations,
 16 and tongues. And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast,

(h). The two women are rivals, as anti-Christ is antagonistic to Christ. The first is the universal visible church, embodying the bride of the Lamb: the second is the bride of Satan. As Christ has had a church in all times for the confession of His truth, so has the devil had a following embodying the sensual and devilish wisdom, maintaining the teaching of Satan's lies and working them out in spurious systems of religion.

Let us sum up here an estimate of the real nature, the essential characteristic of this scarlet woman;—she is a harlot. Harlotry is the standing symbol throughout scripture for debauched worship—idolatry. *When people worship for God what is not God or institute systems or doctrines to take the place of what God has revealed, this is adultery, harlotry.* (Jer. 3:6, 8, 9; Isa. 1:21; Ezek. 16:15, 16, 28, 31, 32; Hosea 2:5, and 3:3; 4:14.) This woman is the embodiment of all idolatry and perversion of the Word and institutes of God. She is the symbol of the universal body of the faithless. She wears on her forehead—"Mother of harlots." This goes back to the beginnings of false systems of worship. It reaches farther back than Romanism, for Romanism is but one of the idolatrous systems of the world's worship.

¹*Many waters*—is undoubtedly symbolic of peoples, nations, etc. She has swayed every nation at some time or other. But it is interesting to recall that the wealth of the city of Babylon was caused by its location on the waters of the Euphrates and a vast system of canals.

²The mystic Babylon is taken by many writers as the symbol of Roman Catholicism; and surely this religious system with her overtowering political aspirations and her mixture of paganism running through warp and woof of her worship must be included; but we believe that the mystic Babylon embraces vastly more than this. It should not be confined to any one false system.

At this point Dr. Seiss, in his Lectures, gives a very interesting study of the earliest history of ancient Babylon, which we take the liberty of giving in condensed form. This is not the Babylon of Nebuchadnezzar but goes still farther back near to the landing of the Ark on Ararat (Gen. 10-11). It dates back to the original Babel with Nimrod as the leader; the name Nimrod means rebellious panther. He led the work of rebellion against God. He inaugurated some of the original abominations of mankind. Arabian history tells us that he was the first king, the organizer of imperialism against patriarchal government, the beginner of king-craft. He was the grandson of Ham. The peo-

these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall ¹²eat her flesh, and ¹³burn her
 17 with fire. For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall
 18 be fulfilled. And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.

ple were determined to hold together against God and they built their image as a standard, an ensign, in which to glory and pride themselves—a Sema Rama, a token for glory;—this name became the name of their goddess which in Greek mythology was said to be the wife of Nimrod. The original image was probably that of a beautiful woman with a dove upon her head having wings spread, called the holy mother. Nimrod named his capital city Babel—original meaning—gate of God. This was in brazen defiance of the true Jehovah. Nimrod defied God by instituting a new system of government, through brute force and worldly policy. He organized a false religion, the parent apostasy of the post diluvian world. Nimrod was the son of Cush, and was called Bar Cush. This became the Bacchus of later mythology, the god of wine and debauchery. Thus history shows that idolatry was not merely the gradual growth of unenlightened human thinking. It was the intentional rebellion of man against God, and flourished in ancient Babylon. The original defiance and ambition of Nimrod was thwarted by the confusion of tongues, but the seed of idolatry lived on. Idolatry has ever been attended with impurity and Babylon has been indeed the mother of harlots.

³The inhabitants of the earth were made drunken. The wine of Babylonianism is the world spirit, the debauching system of idol worship and carnal self-exaltation. It went with the first dispersion after the flood into every nation under heaven. We trace it directly in paganism, in Mohammedanism, in Catholicism and the infidelity of Protestantism. The worship of wealth—commercialism; the worship of intellect—rationalism, are branches from the same root. “Her cup is golden”—world religion to the carnal imagination is progress, it is glorious but it is spiritual prostitution. The wine is the same—Babylon has made every family of the race drunken at one time or another with this wine.

⁴The woman herself is drunken. She drank the blood of the prophets; and in the days of Romanism she drank the blood of martyrs. All persecution of God's true people in every generation springs from this world spirit. Wherever saints are sacrificed for their faith, it is the power of the great harlot—Babylonianism.

⁵She sits upon the beast, evidently for the purpose of managing and directing him.

⁶We recognize here unmistakably, the beast of Ch. XIII but we note now his bloody hue. This refers to his slaughter of saints.

⁷In Bengel's Gnomon of the New Testament the thought is expressed that this is the

reason the nations wonder. They are confused into a sort of mistaken identity. It is said of the Lord that He is the One "who is and who was and who is to come" so the dwellers of the earth wonder at the beast, for "he was, and is not, and will be present."

⁸ Here—arrests attention and bespeaks spiritual discernment for that which is to follow.

⁹ Mountain is here the scriptural symbol of kingdom, of dominion. (Jer. 51:25; Dan. 2:35.) Not the seven hills of Rome (though the early Protestant scholars so interpret it) but the seven empires. The woman is not herself an empire for she is longer lived than any one kingdom. Rome was the empire in power at the time John wrote. Five had already fallen:—Greece, Persia, Babylon, Assyria, Egypt. One is yet to come. These seven great world empires support the woman as their pride and joy. She sways their administrations. They are her lovers and she their patronizing lady, Babylonianism, the dragon's bride, powerful in the world's governments of every period.

¹⁰ The consensus of authority identifies these ten horns with the ten toes of the kingly image: Dan. 2:41, 42 and 7:7, 20, 24. Bengel raises the question as to whether these kings will be divided into two groups of five corresponding to the toes on two feet.

¹¹ This is the meaning of the wine-press.

¹² This figure betokens extreme hostility. Xenophon speaks of the hatred existing between the pure Spartans and the Helots and says that no true Spartan could conceal his readiness to eat the Helot raw.

¹³ This was the punishment for fornication on the part of a priest's daughter. (Lev. 21:9.)

John was led into the wilderness to see the judgment of the harlot. Wherever the true worship and institutions of God are trampled under foot, it is wilderness. Babylonianism boasts of the progress of man, the success of governments. It loves to dwell upon liberty, equality, fraternity as the product of human intelligence. It is always prophesying of the glorious achievement of humanity. When all this materialism and Satanic wisdom has reached its full bloom this world will be a wilderness. John is amazed and bewildered at this woman.

(b). The Fall of The Woman.

XVIII-XIX:1-6.

CHAPTER XVIII.

1 AND after these things I saw another
 2 angel come down from heaven, hav-
 ing great power; and the earth was
 lightened with his glory. And he
 cried mightily with a strong voice,
 saying, Babylon the great ^{is} fallen,
 is fallen, and is become the habita-
 tion of ¹devils, and the ²hold of every
 foul spirit, and a ³cage of every un-
 3 clean and hateful bird. For all na-
 tions have drunk of the ⁴wine of the
 wrath of her fornication, and the
 kings of the earth have committed
 fornication with her, and the mer-
 chants of the earth are waxed rich
 through the ⁵abundance of her delica-
 4 cies. And I heard another voice from
 heaven, ⁶saying, Come out of her, my
 people, that ye be not partakers of
 her sins, and that ye receive not of
 5 her plagues. For her sins have
 reached unto heaven, and God hath
 6 remembered her iniquities. Reward
 her even as she rewarded you, ⁷and
 double unto her double according to
 her works: in the cup which she hath
 7 filled, fill to her double. How much
 she hath glorified herself, and lived
 deliciously, so much torment and sor-
 row give her: for she saith in her
 heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow,
 8 and shall see no sorrow. Therefore
 shall her plagues come in ⁹one day,
 death, and mourning, and famine; and
 she shall be utterly burned with fire:

In the midst of mystery and recognizing the great diversity among teachers equally scholarly and devout, we desire not to seem arbitrary in our interpretation. We realize that to insist upon the exact identity of the scarlet woman would be unprofitable and confusing. We cannot undertake to draw hard and fast distinctions; but it seems to us that the scriptures justify one in the conclusion that the woman has two different aspects—Babylon, a city and Babylon, a mystery, or symbol. Just what is the relation of the scarlet woman to the False Prophet, we are unable to determine; but we cannot accept the interpretation that they are one and the same, for we believe, as previously stated, that the false prophet will be a person. This portion of the Apocalypse seems to us to teach that Babylonianism in its final presentation will be embodied in a literal city. Many commentators believe that Babylon as a city will be restored. The ancient prophecies of the sudden and utter destruction of Babylon have never been entirely fulfilled. (Isa. 13; Jer. 51.) Isaiah locates this complete overthrow in the Day of the Lord. (Isa. 13:6.) It has never been utterly desolate without an inhabitant since the time of Nimrod. There is today a city of 10,000 there. In connection with the thought of the restoration of the city of Babylon it is interesting to consider the passage found in Zech. 5:9-11.—

“9 Then lifted I up mine eyes, and looked, and, behold, there came out two women, and the wind *was* in their wings; for they had wings like the wings of a stork: and they lifted up the ephah between the earth and the heaven.

10 Then said I to the angel that talked with me, Whither do these bear the ephah?

11 And he said unto me, To build it a house in the land of Shinar: and it shall be established, and set there upon her own base.”

This is the accepted symbol of commerce. An ephah, the common bushel measure; the talent of lead, the flat weight used in measuring tonnage. The wings of the female figures—the two wings of commerce covering land and sea. In the midst is the lawless woman, the great harlot of this Apocalypse. A house is to be built for it in the land of Shinar. Babylon is in the land of Shinar. (Gen. 11:2-9; Dan. 1:1-2.) This prophecy points to the rebuilding of ancient Babylon as the great commercial center of the world. Independent of other centers it will have its own unique dominion.

Prophecy also indicates that Babylon will be the last of the world powers to drink the cup of wrath. (Jer. 25:17-26; Jer. 50:12, 13, 35-40.) John names it Babylon not simply in mystery as we say Babylonianism but he says “Babylon, the mighty city.” This **must**

for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her.

- 9 And ⁸the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall
10 see the smoke of her burning. Standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in
11 one hour is thy judgment come. And ⁹the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more: The merchandise of ¹⁰gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and ¹¹silk, and scarlet, and ¹²all thyine wood, and all manner vessels ¹³of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble,
13 and ¹⁴cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and
14 souls of men. And the fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee, and all things which were ¹⁵dainty and ¹⁶goodly are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them
15 no more at all. The merchants of these things, which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and
16 wailing. And saying, Alas, alas, that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones,

have meant to John the actual local city, for John knew it as a geographical center. This city in its description is clearly a commercial city, the mart of nations. There is no mention of anything military, ecclesiastical, or educational in it. It is all wealth, buying and selling.

We are even now in the grip of Babylonianism. Commerce today monopolizes legislation, dictates international treaties, governs kings in the regulation of power, builds railways, cuts ship canals, unwinds electric cables across lands and seas, employs millions of people, subsidizes the press, controls the markets of the world, has her living organizations in every nation and city and every day is protecting herself by close combination so that no government can act against her will. "Corporations have no conscience" has become a proverb, and every bound of religion is overreached for commercial gain. Commerce is even now mightier than any pope, any throne or any other one human power. Babylon's god is covetousness, this is idolatry—the root of all evil.

^a The angel comes down from heaven with authority: this is Christ. Rev. 21:23; 22:25.

^b "Fallen, fallen" two-fold, Babylon in mystery, as a system, and Babylon, the city. This is not an announcement, but the word of authority that brings the fulfillment. The first fall of Babylon as a system is given in chapter 17. The final fall comes at the pouring out of the last bowl of wrath.

¹ Devils, more properly *demons*.

² The word carries the meaning *prison*.

³ Not merely a cage, but a *resort*.

⁴ The wine of fornication has turned to wrath against herself. Her illicit loves turn to loathing.

⁵ Abundance—power, overstrength, wantonness of luxury.

⁶ Here again is an abrupt interjection—"Come out of her, my people"—God seems to be again speaking to a remnant of the Jews, for there will be Jews in this last great commercial metropolis. (Jer. 50:4-9; 51:6, 45, 53, 57.)

⁷ Death, mourning, famine, fire indicate that this is the destruction of a literal city. The drying up of the Euphrates will be one means of producing this destruction, for the city will thus be cut off from this water supply for its shipping, its gardens, etc. An earthquake will be followed by fire, and the city without water is helpless (Isaiah 47:1-15). Babylon burned Jerusalem, and her own punishment will be fire. (Jer. 51:24.)

17 and pearls! For in one hour so great riches is come to nought. ¹⁷And every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as
 18 trade by sea, stood afar off, and cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What *city* is like
 19 unto this great city! And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas, that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate.
 20 Rejoice over her, *thou* heaven, and *ye* holy apostles and prophets; for God
 21 hath avenged you on her. And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast *it* into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at
 22 all. And the voice of harpers, and ¹⁸musicians, and of ¹⁹pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft *he be*, shall be found any more in thee; and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at
 23 all in thee; And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; ²⁰and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations ²¹de-
 24 ceived. And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.

⁸“Render unto her double” this is the commission given. (I Cor. 6:2; Rev. 12:5; 19:19-21.) Double refers to her two-fold aspect as a city and as a system. Her sin also is two-fold. She is an oppressor of nations and she sins in her own pride and wantonness by deifying wealth. She will be punished according to her works. God keeps a strict record; as we measure, it shall be meted to us again. Babylon is a region full of bitumen. It is full of oil springs, peat, naphtha, etc. It is similar to the country of Sodom and Gomorrah. Isa. 13:19; Jer. 49:18; 50:40. Thus Nimrod’s gate of God becomes the mouth of hell. In a very true sense every city is Babylon to them who have her spirit and commit her iniquities.

Let us analyze briefly the crimes of this gorgeous but wretched woman. The merchants were the great men of the earth. Commerce is not necessarily sinful, but its tendency is in that direction. Graft and dishonesty creep into every line of business. Commerce is built on selfish principles and for selfish ends. American—Christian—whiskey is carried to every nation. English opium is the curse of China, etc. And we are yet but in the infancy of trusts and commercial combinations. The governments of the world are already under the control of the money kings. This is the beginning of the great apostasy in the Church, for in commerce, Church is nothing—State is nothing—Bible is nothing—Sabbath is nothing—Conscience is nothing. Babylon is a bewitching sorceress. She has the power to so excuse her covetousness as to make it alluring. Her doctrine of human progress on material lines is so plausible and subtle as to be fascinating. She deludes the nations into believing that unscrupulous commerce is developing civilization and making the world better. In this she hides the true ugliness of her avarice.

Her presumptuous conceit and arrogance, her self-sufficiency is an affront to Deity. She is purely earthly yet she thinks herself invincible against all adversity. “I sit a queen.” In this she exalts herself above the Church, the Bride of the Lamb. She is not a widow. Her husband is not away as is the glorious Bridegroom. She claims to have by her wealth and luxury what the suffering church has had in promise only. She glories in material prosperity, holding spiritual verities in contempt. Luke 14:11.

From verse 9 of this chapter on to the close of the passage, Ch. 19:6, we have a vivid account of the attitude of all creation toward this event, the fall of Babylon, which is one of the most marvelous events of time. The whole universe is thrilled. Two worlds

are concerned, but they are in sharp contrast in their attitude toward this catastrophe.

The earthly attitude—woe.

⁸Lamentation of royalty and dominion. Babylon had been the love of kings—they had consented to her wantonness. When she falls, the main artery of their pomp and glory is cut. Every nation contemplates her burning with horror. They do not repent but woe is the outcry from every capital city on the earth.

⁹Lamentations of the merchants. Because of the collapse of trade. Never before Babylon's rule had fortunes been made so easily. A study of the commodities bought and sold shows that there was nothing of intellectual or spiritual value involved. It was simply the display of luxury and the pauperizing of degenerate wealth. This mourning is not because of sympathy with Babylon's distress but the selfish motive—their market is gone.

¹⁰The gold, silver, precious stones, pearls, linen, purple, etc., are all the "costly array" of those who "live sumptuously every day."

¹¹Silk was very costly among the Romans. In the reign of Tiberius a law was passed against "men disgracing themselves with silken garments." It was a mark of effeminacy that later became quite general.

¹²Thyine wood—from a North-African tree, used as incense, and also for inlaying. Costly tables were made from sections of the tree in its whole diameter. The wood was dappled and sometimes resembled the markings of a tiger, panther, or peacock.—Vincent.

¹³See I Kings 10:18; I Kings 22:39; Psa. 45:8; Amos 3:15.

¹⁴See Exod. 30:23; Prov. 7:17.

¹⁵The root meaning of this word is grease, fat. Hence bright, shiny, etc. It denotes wealth.

¹⁶Goodly—sumptuous. Luke 23:11. Jas. 2:2.

¹⁷Lamentations of the employees of the merchant princes—the sea faring people, etc. They also mourn because their own employment is interrupted. It is a triple lamentation and each is double—woe for Babylonianism, the system, and woe for Babylon, the city. This makes again the evil six complete.

Verse 20 of Ch. 18 brings us to the Heavenly Attitude—Hallelujah. There is rejoicing among the holy throngs. This is the culmination of the controversy between the spiritual and the worldly, which has been going on in every generation. Here we see inherent and

CHAPTER XIX.

1 AND after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, ²²Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto
2 the Lord our God. For true and righteous *are* his judgments; for he

hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of
 3 his servants at her hand. And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke
 4 rose up for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen;
 5 Alleluia. And a ²³voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear
 6 him, both small and great. And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: ²⁴for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.

eternal antagonism between the two companies. That which marks the saint is condemnation to the world. The saints have been in the minority through this dispensation. The world has hated and persecuted them because they have condemned its evil prosperity. The Ahabs, Herods, and Neros have held the thrones. The Elijahs and Pauls have borne the crosses but there is a glorious vindication ahead. The renunciation of the world will be rewarded.

¹⁸ The term *music* had a broader meaning in the Greek than our own. Musicians included all men of art and culture.

¹⁹ Pipers—flute-players. Dissolute women were hired as musicians at Greek banquets.

²⁰ Compare with Jer. 25:10.

²¹ Deceived—led astray.

²² The word 'hallelujah' is a heavenly word. It is the same in every tongue and means adoration and joy.

²³ The voice from the throne—we are not told whose voice it is, but some authorities take it to be Christ Himself joining in the praise of God the Father. Then follows the voice as of many waters with still fuller praise.

²⁴ Our Lord God has Himself now entered upon the actual administration of the government of the world.

THE REVELATION

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Notes

THE REVELATION

Notes

IV. Christ in His Relation to the Millennium.

XIX:7-XX:6.

A. The Inauguration.

XIX:7-XX:3.

7 Let us be glad and rejoice, and give
honour to him: for ¹the ⁵marriage of
²the Lamb is come, and ³his wife ⁴hath
8 made herself ready. And to her was
granted that she should be arrayed in
fine linen, clean and white: for the
fine linen is the righteousness of
9 saints. And he saith unto me, Write,
Blessed *are* ⁷they which are called
⁶unto the marriage supper of the
Lamb. And he saith unto me, These
10 are the true sayings of God. And I
fell at his feet to worship him. And
he said unto me, See *thou do it* not:
I am thy fellow servant, and of thy
brethren that have the testimony of
Jesus: worship God: for the testi-
mony of Jesus is the spirit of
prophecy.

Having finished the tribulation period we come now to the very storm center of controversy concerning this wonderful Book, in this division which sets forth the millennium. Many Bible students seem ready to turn away from it entirely, satisfying themselves with the thought that it is a highly figurative passage, but if we should grant for the sake of the argument that it is purely figurative still we could not deny its significance. To do so is to put ourselves in the same class with those critics who say they cannot accept the doctrine of hell because the Bible description of it is figurative. If the Apocalypse is an inspired book and has a right to its place in the holy Scriptures, then we must deal fairly with this portion, as with all the rest, for surely the Holy Spirit intends it for our edification.

Bengel in his *Gnomon of the New Testament*, quotes a scholar who wrote on this subject in the early part of the eighteenth century as expressing surprise that "anyone can shrink from the title of Chiliast," because it is plain that anyone who embraces the Divine authority of the Apocalypse must of necessity admit the thousand years in some sense. And Bengel adds—"Very well said." * * * "There is no error, much less danger, in saying that the thousand years are future," etc.

Dr. Adam Clark appends to his commentary on Revelation an explanation that the scheme of this book as given by "the learned and pious Bengel [from whom I have quoted above] may be found in the late Rev. John Wesley's notes on this book." This hint should make us slow to say that Wesley was antagonistic to the doctrine of a millennial age. Dr. Clark then adds, that though he cannot accept in detail any one scheme and order for this book he deems it right to give that of "Mr. Lowman, which is nearly the same with that of Bishop Newton, and which, as far as I can learn, is considered by the most rational divines as being the most consistent and probable." Bear with us while we quote briefly from the above mentioned Mr. Lowman on this point of the millennium. "An angel sent from heaven to shut up Satan in the bottomless pit, as in a secure prison, for one thousand years, during which time there will be a very happy state of the Church, in purity, peace, and prosperity." And again from the same authority—"After the thousand years of the Church's prosperity shall be expired, Satan will be loosed again for a little season; a new attempt will be made to revive the corruptions of the Church, and a spirit of persecution, which shall end in the final destruction of Satan's power, and of all the enemies of pure and true religion."

- 11 ⁸And I saw ⁹heaven opened, and behold ¹⁰a white horse; and he that sat upon him *was* called ¹¹Faithful and True, and ¹²in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His ¹³eyes *were* as a flame of fire, and on his head *were* ¹⁴many crowns; and he had a name written, ¹⁵that no man knew, but he himself. And ¹⁶he *was* clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called ¹⁷The Word of God. And the armies *which* ¹⁸were in heaven followed him upon ¹⁹white horses, ²⁰clothed in fine linen, ²¹white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a ²²sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations; and he ²³shall rule them with a rod of iron: and ²⁴he treadeth the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on *his* ²⁵vesture and ²⁶on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

I have given the above from recognized early commentators to strengthen the later authorities in maintaining the position that the thousand years is not a mystical figure but clearly defines a period of time—a dispensation yet before us.

¹But before going further into the general discussion of the theme let us turn to the text. The inauguration of this glorious period opens with the marriage of The Lamb.

²Who is the Bridegroom? The Lamb. Matt. 9:15; Ezek. 16:7-14; Eph. 5:25; John 3:29; II Cor. 11:2; Isa. 54:1-8.

³Who is the Bride? Here again the commentators point out that not all of the Lord's followers are included. There are classes among true believers, the queen and the virgins, her companions. In the parable of the Ten Virgins we have the picture of the coming Bridegroom and the virgins as friends going out to meet him; the Bride is already within, and the virgins have no thought of becoming his Bride, they are friends, companions. The eagle saints who are first taken are the Bride. Luke 17:33-37. The virgins have been aroused by the departure of the Bride. The scriptures teach that there are diversities in the rewards of the saints. There are ranks, some are greatest, some least in the kingdom of heaven. All these saints are associated with the Bride as a part of her company, and are blest in their nearness to the Bridegroom and, although not strictly the Bride, they are, in a general sense, included. The blessedness of the marriage supper is much wider than being a part of the Bride; it reaches the whole company. The holy city, Jerusalem, is also called the bride because it embraces the Bride. It is her home; it contains the Bride, her retinue and all her companions. All ranks of saints are included for they add to the glory of the Bride.

⁴What is included in making herself ready? She is clothed in a spiritual linen, pure and bright,—righteousness. There is self-activity on her part. There is also bestowment; her clothing is given to her. There is obedience; she makes the use intended of what is put at her disposal. These elements enter into the previous career of the Bride and do not simply occur at the time. Phil. 3:8-14. She must have the righteousness of justification and sanctification.

⁵What is the marriage? John does not see the marriage; he only sees the heavenly rejoicing. The marriage is not exactly the same as the marriage supper; it occurs in heaven, for a little later John sees her as a city coming down out of heaven. The marriage is Christ, the Lamb, formally acknowledging and taking to Himself as co-partners

of His dominion His chosen faithful ones. It occurs before Christ and the risen ones are manifested to the earth. It may celebrate the opening of the city—of the many mansions—as the home for the Bride and her company.

⁶What is the marriage supper? Marriage is the establishment of a relationship; the supper is the refreshment and the social joy attending it. Matt. 26:29; Luke 22:16.

⁷The guests. The Bridegroom and the Bride are the central figures. Whether as Bride or guest, the whole Church of the Firstborn from Adam to the last martyr under anti-Christ will be there radiant in a complete redemption.

⁸In the eleventh verse we find ourselves again beholding a scene of war. It is the battle leading to the millennial reign. The predominating figure which immediately holds our attention is that of the mighty conqueror, who rides forth on his white horse. (Compare with Ch. VI:2.) This sublime Hero is our Christ Jesus.

⁹He comes forth out of heaven—this is the rending of the heaven for the glorious Epiphany of Christ with His people. We believe “He ascended into heaven” and that “from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.”

¹⁰He rides upon a white horse which here signifies royalty, judgment, war. He is no longer seated upon the foal of an ass; He comes now as the King of Kings.

¹¹“He is faithful and true” in sharp contrast with those He is about to destroy.

¹²In righteousness He judgeth and warreth. Heaven cannot be at peace with iniquity. When sin becomes incorrigible and incurable it must be put down by force. He wars not as human kings war in pride and covetousness—but, in absolute justice.

¹³“His eyes are as a flame of fire”—signifying omniscient perception and indignation. He penetrates all darkness and searcheth all depths.

¹⁴“Many diadems”—(II Sam. 12:30; Ch. 12:3; Ch. 13:1.)—signifying accumulated victory and dominion, Christ the mighty Victor in many battles.

¹⁵He has an unknowable name; this connects Him with the incomprehensible Godhead. The beast has names of blasphemy but this name is above every name. (Psa. 33:6; John 1:1-14.)

¹⁶“His vesture is stained with blood”—not the blood of Calvary but the blood of enemies already vanquished.

¹⁷The Word—this name for our Lord is found in the New Testament only in the

17 And I saw ²³an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together ²⁴unto the supper
 18 of the great God; That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all
 19 *men, both* free and bond, both small and great. And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the
 20 horse and against his army. And ²⁵the beast was taken, and ²⁶with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brim-
 21 stone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which *sword* proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.

writings of John. This is one of the links which connects the Apocalypse with John's other writings.

^{18*}Shepherdize with a rod; not the sharp sword of destruction but a rod of correction; tending; directing. "Feed—shepherdize—my sheep". The shepherdizing indicates reorganizing of the nations, and this is to come after the rebellious kings and their armies are swept away. The saints will share in this dominion.

¹⁸ A sharp sword proceeds out of His mouth. This is not an instrument of mercy as the sword of the Spirit; it is like a little sickle, the sword of almighty justice. (Isa. 11:4.) It suggests the ease with which He accomplishes His purpose. He speaks and it is done.

¹⁹ We have come now to the fulfilment of the prophecy concerning the wine-press, given in Ch. 14:19.

²⁰ On His thigh—King of Kings and Lord of Lords—This announces His authority, majesty and dominion.

Having studied somewhat minutely the Royal Leader in this battle we turn now to look a little more closely at the hosts which follow Him.

²¹ He is married now and His Bride is with Him. (Jude 14:15). He is Jehovah of hosts. "On white horses",—they, too, are mounted on white horses like that which their Captain rides—signifying that these, too, are royal and righteous. Whether the horses be literal or not is not essential. They are at least the expression of holy power carrying the heavenly King and His hosts to victory over earthly armies. Their power is a reality whatever its literal form may be. The armies of heaven all appear to be cavalry.

²² "Clothed in white linen"—this signifies righteousness and shows that they are saints not angels. They wear no armor for they are immortal and cannot be injured. Christ carries the only sword; it is His personal victory; He treads the wine-press alone.

The armies encountered. There can be no doubt of their identity—devil agencies had gathered them for rebellion under the superhuman leadership of the beast. Psalms 2:1-3.

It is left for us now simply to look upon the completeness of His triumph. In Psalm 2:4 we read—"He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision." We have reached the fulfilment of those words. The laugh of God! What

dread significance! The six thousand long years of His mercy are past, and now comes His sovereign contempt for all opposing forces of earth and hell.

²³ An angel stationed in the sun anticipates the outcome and cries to the birds of prey. Kings and leaders are devoured by vultures with no one left to bury them.

²⁴ A better reading is—the great supper of God.

²⁵ The beast was taken—the head of the revolt is stricken first. He is a supernatural being, seemingly incapable of physical death. No sword smites him. He does not die. He is taken alive and cast into the lake of fire.

²⁶ With him is also the false prophet. Though not a warrior, this prophet has been an author of the culmination of the world's wickedness. He, too, is not slain, but *taken*. With these two gone, the rest are mere mortals, and the conflict is soon over. (Psa. 2:9; Habakkuk 3:12; Dan. 2:35; Matt. 22:44.) After the sword of destruction comes the rod of correction and reorganization. This is the law of the new administration gathering the population of the earth into their proper companies.

The issue of the battle is thorough in its completeness of victory. The anti-Christ, the false prophet, with their kings and armies are overthrown and also the Power back of and instigating their rebellion—the dragon, the serpent, the devil, Satan.

Let us look again at these four names.

(1). Dragon, the name that has reference to his administration through political powers and earthly sovereignties. This power he loses forever at this time. Though loosed again he never again regains his prestige with kings and rulers; his dragon rule is ended.

(2). The old serpent—old because he was in existence before the dawn of human history. The name serpent alludes to his subtility, deceit and deadly malignity. It is as a serpent that he disseminates false doctrines and in his subtlety, especially aims his poison against the true believer. His serpent power ends now for never again does he attack the Bride of the Lamb with his deceits.

(3). The devil—this name signifies a slanderer, a liar, a murderer; he slandered God and told a ruinous lie when he beguiled Eve in the garden. This is his essential nature, his deepest self-hood; and he reappears in this character at the end of the thousand years.

CHAPTER XX.

1 And I saw an ²⁷angel come down
from heaven, having the key of the
bottomless pit and a great chain in
2 his hand. And he laid hold on the
dragon, that old serpent, which is
the Devil, and Satan, and bound him
3 a thousand years, And ²⁸cast him into
the bottomless pit, and shut him up,
and set a seal upon him, that he
should deceive the nations no more,
till the thousand years should be
fulfilled: and after that he ²⁹must be
loosed a little season.

(4). Satan signifies an adversary, an accuser, and one who lies in wait to entrap. In this guise he attacked Job and tempted Christ and as such he reappears at the end of the thousand years.

²⁷ A question arises as to the identity of this angel with the key. A number of commentators think this is Jesus Christ Himself. Compare with Rev. 10:1-7; 14:18, 19; 18:1. Christ's appearances vary according to the work He is to do—He comes now to seize a fallen archangel.

²⁸ This is as literal a seizure and overthrow as was the battle. If Satan is a literal being, his binding must be equally literal. Does someone ask "How can a chain of iron bind a spirit?" It is not an iron chain but a chain of divine make, just as the sword is of divine make. (See Jude 6.) The chain is real and the abyss is real.

²⁹ Must—because it is according to God's purpose.

We note that the place into which the devil is cast is not the same as that into which the beast and the false prophet are thrown. This is the abyss from which the beast came. Ch. 17:8.

A study of the force of these words and phrases may be helpful. The abyss indicates a fore-hell; the lake of fire, the final hell. The Hebrew word Sheol is the equivalent of the Greek word Hades, neither word is ever used to denote the final hell. It is a loose translation to use it, signifying the grave or the pit. Its true meaning is a place in the unseen world for departed spirits whether it be of bliss or torment. Paradise is a department in Hades for the good. The scripture teaches that an impassable gulf lies between the two parts of Hades. Christ and the penitent thief went to the good part. Christ was not in Hades as a subject of death but as the Conqueror of death. (I Peter 3:18-19; Matt. 27:52-53; Psalm 68:18.) He led captivity captive at that time and took the sting from death. The gates of Hades have never closed on a true believer since Christ's resurrection.

The Hebrew word "Abaddon"—Destruction—The abyss; a deeper and more wretched place than Hades. (Lk. 8:26-31. Rev. 11:7; and 17:8.) It is the abode of demons and the baser spirits among wicked men.

Tartarus—The abode of the original rebellious angels. (II Peter 2:4.) This is distinct from Hades and also from the Abyss.

Tophet the Hebrew word=Gehenna, the Greek word, and indicates the final hell. Matt. 5:29, 30. Matt. 19:28 and Matt. 23:14 and 15. This is the lake of fire. No one has yet entered this final hell.

The beast and the false prophet are cast in first, then Satan, and finally, all the wicked.

B. The Reign XX:4-6.

4 And ¹I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and *I saw* the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received *his* mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. ²This *is* the first resurrection. ³Blessed and holy *is* he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him ⁴a thousand years.

We have arrived at the passage that sets forth in simple direct words the statement that the saints are to reign with Christ a thousand years. Poets and Sages in all times have dreamed of a golden age and here the prophet tells us that there is a glorious realization of this Utopia ahead for the true believer. One that transcends all human dreams. Why is it so hard to accept? Why do we try to symbolize away the meaning of this passage? Is it because we have been frightened by the vagaries and materialism of speculations in which some commentators have indulged? Because unprofitable and even erroneous theories have been advanced by some, shall we let slip our hope, our comfort, our inspiration, which lies like a gem in this wonderful setting? To do this is to make the same blunder that multitudes of poor hungry souls have made in turning from the doctrine of scriptural holiness, because some fanatics claiming to start with holiness have run into absurd extremes. Does it not seem that our hesitation to accept this prophecy is akin to the blindness of ancient Israel who found it so difficult to see the fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy in the earthly life of our Lord, the period of His humiliation? Is it not this very dullness that has led many to hold this marvelous Apocalypse in a sort of suspicion withholding an acknowledgment of its full authority? Let us cast off our hesitation and accept this glorious truth on the authority of the unshakable word of God. But we are not wholly dependent upon this one passage for this truth. In Daniel 7:18 we read "the saints shall take the kingdom." And in Luke 19:17-19 Christ refers to rulership—dominion of the saints. We also recall that Christ's promise to the overcomers of the Laodicean period (Rev. 3:21) is a definite pledge of dominion, etc.

This reign of Christ with His Bride must mean more than the christianizing of existing governments, by the introduction of Christian principles. We believe the scriptures sustain the conclusion that it means the personal sovereignty of Christ. (Isa. 9:6,7;

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Dan. 3:32-45. Luke 1:26-33.) Men have experimented with power for six thousand years and the injustice and inhumanity of the war now in progress in Europe; the greed and graft of the present day in our own republic prove that man is a failure. Christ's rulership is the only satisfactory government.

Our reigning with Christ is not on the ground of our worthiness. It is according to His riches in glory. "Christ suffered for us, according to the Scriptures; He was raised for us, according to the Scriptures; He ascended up on high and intercedes for us, according to the Scriptures; and He is coming again to receive us unto Himself, according to the Scriptures. And according to the Scriptures, we are not only to share in the joys of the millennial age, but we are to be entrusted with authority according to our faithfulness in the Church age"—Blanchard.

Does not this prophecy of the dominion of the saints throw a little light upon human nature? Is not this ambition for leadership in one form or another a universal desire among the children of men? May not the unholy ambitions that have burned so fiercely in human breasts be but the carnal perversion of an instinct which in the beginning God planted in humanity for this very purpose, that we should come to this consummation of glory?

One does not speak of the millennium in an average company, that someone does not raise the question of detail in regard to earthly conditions. Shall we live in houses? Shall we plant our crops? Shall we have railroads? etc., etc. Why should we feel ourselves under obligation to answer such questions? Where the Scriptures are silent, our speculations are puny and futile. The Apocalypse does not give the detail of our life in this period and we do well to respect the reticence of the Holy Spirit on this point.

¹ John sees thrones—indicative of sovereign authority. (Dan. 7:9-14, Rev. 3:21.) "They" sat upon them; (Rev. 5:9-10, I. Pet. 2:9 and 5:4. II. Tim. 2:3 to 5, II. Tim. 4:7 and 8.) This dominion is not an empty figure. According to Dean Alford it signifies that they are constituted judges and exercise the royal functions of sovereignty. In I Cor. 6:2, 3 Paul puts to the Corinthian church these questions—"Know ye not that ye shall judge angels? How much more things that pertain to this life? Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? And if the world shall be judged by you are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?" Paul is evidently writing concerning some very

practical every day matters which have arisen among them and the only fair conclusion to draw from his words is that he himself sincerely believes and holds out to these Corinthian believers the anticipation of rulership. But do you hesitate to accept it because you cannot understand why this should be? Surely there are many scriptural truths which we believe "by heart" that we cannot satisfactorily account for "by head." Since Christ has so thoroughly identified Himself with humanity that throughout eternity He remains the Son of Man, may not this dominion of the saints be His exaltation of our humanity?

I. Thess. 4:16.

- 16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

I. Cor. 15:22, 23.

- 22 For as in Adam all die, even so in
23 Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.

Phil. 3:10, 11.

- 10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made
11 conformable unto his death. If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.

Matt. 27:52, 53.

- 52 And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept
53 arose, And came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many.

² As we come to this statement regarding the resurrection we find ourselves again upon contested ground. This chapter makes a clear distinction between the first and second resurrections and Dean Alford says "a consistent interpretation demands that both resurrections must be literal." The millennial age lies between them. Bengel says "many, even of the ancients [early church fathers] admit the first resurrection." And he mentions Tertullian and Augustine among the number. But back of human authority lies the word of God. What do the Scriptures teach? The word here translated "resurrection" is used forty times in the New Testament, and means in every case, the rising again of the body from the power of death.

We give herewith a few characteristics of the first resurrection as designated in the Scriptures. (For convenience the text is printed in the marginal column.)

1. ³ It is the resurrection of saints only, for only believers are "blessed and holy." Read in support of this position, I Thess. 4:16; I Cor. 15:22, 23. Note with special care the passage Phil. 3:10, 11. If there is to be only one general resurrection for all, good and evil, why should Paul be straining every energy to attain unto it? Does it not appeal to reason that his desire is to attain unto the first resurrection?—that of the saints?

2. It is a resurrection which takes place in different stages. It is not complete all at one and the same time. I Cor. 15:23 quoted above makes the clear statement that there will be orders in this resurrection. Matt. 27:52, 53 tells us of a partial resurrection at the time Christ arose. The fourth chapter of Rev. tells us of the rapture of the saints. To this, I Thess. 4:16, 17 also refers. Read together with this Luke 17:34-37. Matt. 24:27-28 refers to the gathering of the eagles, and students of the Apocalypse are

Luke 17:34-37.

- 34 I tell you, in that night there shall be two *men* in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left.
 35 Two *women* shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and
 36 the other left. Two *men* shall be in the field; the one shall be taken,
 37 and the other left. And they answered and said unto him, Where, Lord? And he said unto them, Wheresoever the body *is*, thither will the eagles be gathered together.

Matt. 24:27, 28.

- 27 For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the
 28 Son of man be. For wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together.

Luke 21:34-36.

- 34 And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come
 35 upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth.
 36 Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.

familiar with the interpretation that eagles are the saints in living union with Christ, those who draw their life from Him—the Bride. Notice also the passage Luke 21:34-36. If there is only one general resurrection, what is the force of such a passage? In Ch. 7 of the Apocalypse we find the Palm Bearers are resurrected; in Ch. 11, the Two Witnesses; in Ch. 14, the 144,000. There are many other passages bearing upon this theme, but we pass them, and come to the conclusion that the first resurrection is made up of orders beginning with the resurrection of Christ and receiving its last additions about the time of the final overthrow of the beast.

3. It is a resurrection which, as a whole, is no where pictorially described. It is too varied and diverse to be described by any one scene. This is not the case with “the rest of the dead”—the second resurrection. They all have their judgment at the same time.

4. The completion of this resurrection introduces a wonderful change in the earth's history. The rule of ABSOLUTE RIGHT will mean the breaking through of an immortal power which will rebuke and overturn injustice and sin in every department of life.

5. The completion of this resurrection promotes the subjects of it to a transcendent glory. The crowning honour of sainthood is yet to come. I. Cor. 15:19. In this resurrection corruption puts on incorruption, weakness is swallowed up in power. The saints now have reached their exalted place. They are seated upon thrones.

4One word more regarding the period—one thousand years. To those who would contend that it must not be taken literally we would reply it need not be. We maintain simply that it is a definite period of time with distinct boundaries as clearly marked as those of any other dispensation. Some thinkers connect this with the statement recorded in II Pet. 3:8—“One day is with the Lord as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day,” and suggest as there were seven days or periods in Creation so here we come to the seventh, the Sabbath, the dispensation day of rest. It may be years, it may be cycles of years, but it is clearly marked in the Mind of God.

In closing the comments on this division of the book, let us sum up briefly the chief characteristics of the millennium.

The reign of Christ and His saints is a shepherdizing of “The Nations.” Nations are the divisions of the race of man on the earth, therefore, it would seem that the logical interpretation of this passage indicates it to be a reign on the earth.

1. It is a definite period dating from the overthrow of anti-Christ.

2. The period must follow this present dispensation—we are now in the “Church” period—the Ecclesia, and the object of this present dispensation is the gathering together of the Bride, out from the rest of mankind. The command to preach, to baptize, to observe the Lord’s Supper is limited to Christ’s coming again. The Millennium lies beyond this second coming.

3. The millennium is altogether different from this dispensation in government—Satan is to be bound and the nations ruled with a rod of iron. Today is the period of God’s mercy and longsuffering. Today the church is pleading with an adverse world, under the allurements of the princely deceiver, Satan—“Be ye reconciled.” In the millennium evil will not be tolerated. (Psa. 2:10-12.) The disobedient will die.

4. The general condition of the earth and man himself will be vastly improved. (Matt. 19:28, Isa. 33:24, Isa. 30:18-26, Isa. 65:20-23.) The days of a man will be as the days of a tree—Blessed fruitfulness will be upon humanity and all nature. It is not understood to be the final bliss of the eternal state, but a great stride toward it. (Isa. 29:18-19.)

5. The ending of the millennial dispensation will not be the ending of the state of blessedness. Christ still reigns as a righteous King and the earth is undisturbed in its advancement. But Satan is loosed for a little while at the close. Commentators suggest that the purpose of this must be to test the loyalty and devotion of the nations of this period.

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V. Christ's Manifestation to the World in the Battle of the Great Day of God Almighty.

XX:7-10.

7 And when the thousand years are
 expired, Satan shall be loosed out of
 8 his prison, And shall go out to deceive
 the nations which are in the four
 quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog,
 to gather them together to battle: the
 number of whom *is* as the sand of
 9 the sea. And they went up on the
 breadth of the earth, and compassed
 the camp of the saints about, and the
 beloved city: and fire came down
 from God out of heaven, and devoured
 10 them. And the devil that deceived
 them was cast into the lake of fire
 and brimstone, where the beast and
 the false prophet *are*, and shall be
 tormented day and night for ever
 and ever.

This passage may be passed with but a brief analysis of conditions immediately following the millennium. It is unnecessary to enter into any discussion of the fact that this battle is in no way to be confused with the battle given in Ch. 16. The millennial reign stretches between them.

1. The devil is let loose. The Same who bound him now gives him liberty for a brief period. We may not fathom the mystery of God's purpose in this—it may be to show that Satan is still unchanged in his malignant wickedness and it may be to show that man, even after a millennial life must be tested and proved in his obedience before he is fit for the eternal bliss of heaven.

2. The devil seduces Gog and Magog into rebellion. He does not go to the kings this time for there are no mortal kings to be led astray, but he goes directly to the people. We may not be able to identify Gog and Magog, the Scriptures suggest that they come from the corners of the earth, which may indicate remoteness; perhaps they are the hindermost nations in culture and civilization at the time of the millennium. Perhaps it is more probably a testing out of all nations and a final gathering together of all souls who can be deluded by the arch enemy.

3. A terrible disaster ensues. This insane war is quickly terminated. Fire devours them entirely; not one escapes.

4. Satan meets his final perdition. Matt. 25:41. This is the first time that even Satan has come to the final hell, and this ends the last rebellion on this planet,—the last sin, the last death.

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VI. Christ in His Relation to the Final Act of Judgment.

XX:11-15.

- 11 And I saw ¹a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose ²face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for
 12 them. ³And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; ⁴and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is *the book of life*: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, ⁵according to their works.
 13 ⁶And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every
 14 man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.
 15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

¹Our attention is here arrested by the appearance of the Great White Throne. We are not told where this is set. Comparing it with the throne described in Ch. 4 we notice at once that this is naked; there is no rainbow indicating covenant promise; it is great and white—suggesting the immeasurable power of pure, complete, unmingled justice. There is nothing to suggest any further probation. There are no lesser thrones here; no degrees in administration. Here is but one summary, direct administration. There are no spirit torches indicating a degree of grace; no glassy sea, suggesting peace; no song of joy or praise. This throne is simply for the administration of retributive justice. The two thrones seem to be counterparts of one another—the right hand and the left hand administrations; the morning and the evening of the great judgment day.

²The throne has an Awful Occupant. It is the same as that beheld in the first instance. The description gives us no figure, no shape, only the mysterious and awful presence of the Eternal Godhead. This is not simply Jesus, the God-man, though the Scriptures distinctly teach that He is indeed the Judge, but He does His work here under the presence of the Trinity. It is the dreadful presence of Almightyness. The very earth seems to flee before Him. This figure suggests the intensity of this awe.

³A resurrection occurs. There is no trumpet call now, for the trumpet call was for those under covenant relations with the King. Here is simply the going forth of eternal, infinite power. Not one of all the unholy dead from the earliest dawn of time, excepting anti-Christ and the false prophet, but will be in that company. There are no white robes and no palms, for these are sinners before the majesty of Almighty God.

⁴Books are opened. Heaven is keeping a record of every life, no matter how obscure. It is in the book of God's remembrance. There is also another book mentioned here, which is Christ's roll book of the redeemed. This too, will be opened. The first book would seem to contain the record of all deeds done in the body; the second, the record of all those who have obtained salvation thru faith in Jesus Christ. (Jno. 3:36.)

⁵It appears that judgment is determined according to the works of the individual. The teaching here seems to be that there is a just gradation in the sorrows of the wicked. But it is condemnation to all, for there is not one among them whose name is found in the Lamb's book of life. An old manuscript reads—"They were condemned every one, according to their deeds."

Mark 9:44-48.

44 Where their worm dieth not, and the
 45 fire is not quenched. And if thy
 foot offend thee, cut it off: it is
 better for thee to enter halt into
 life, than having two feet to be cast
 into hell, into the fire that never
 46 shall be quenched: Where their
 worm dieth not, and the fire is not
 47 quenched. And if thine eye offend
 thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee
 to enter into the kingdom of God
 with one eye, than having two eyes
 48 to be cast into hell fire: Where their
 worm dieth not, and the fire is not
 quenched.

^eThe sentence is followed by immediate execution. What the lake of fire is, we may not know. Its horror is undoubtedly in a very real sense, subjective. But more than this, we are forced to the conclusion that it is *a place* of torment. Its fire preys upon the whole being and is kindled and kept alive by Almighty Justice. It is the second death. In passing we cite but one text, out of many that might be given, to support the teaching that this second death is not annihilation. Death is not extinction of existence. See Mark 9:44-48.

Notes

THE REVELATION

Notes

VII. The Cosmic Sanctification and The Final Estate of Redemption.

XXI-XXII.

A. The Redeemed World.

XXI:1-8.

1 AND I saw a ¹new heaven and a ²new
earth: for the first heaven and the
first earth were passed away; and
2 there was ³no more sea. And I John
saw ⁴the holy city, new Jerusalem,
coming down from God out of heaven,
prepared as a bride adorned for her
3 husband. And I heard a great voice
out of heaven saying, Behold, ⁵the
tabernacle of God is with men, and
he will dwell with them, and they
shall be his people, ⁶and God himself
shall be with them, *and be* their God.
4 And God shall ⁷wipe away all tears
from their eyes; and there shall be
⁸no more death, neither ⁹sorrow, nor
¹⁰crying, neither shall there be any
more pain: for the former things are
5 passed away. And he that sat upon
the throne said, Behold, I make all
things new. And he said unto me,
Write: for these words are true and
6 faithful. And he said unto me, It is
done. I am Alpha and Omega, the be-
ginning and the end. I will give unto
him that is athirst of the fountain
7 of the water of life freely. He that
overcometh shall inherit all things;
and I will be his God, and he shall
8 be my son. But the ¹¹fearful, and

As we approach the culminating division of this precious book we find ourselves again on controversial ground. We are aware of some of the perplexing questions which intrude upon us at this juncture. We cannot answer them with positiveness. We attempt only to give our own prayerful conviction.

¹ We see here a new heaven. It is not blotted out, but made new.—See Isa. 65:17. This must indicate eternal splendor.

² The earth new. All the beauties of nature are but a hint of what will be when the whole creation, groaning and travailing now under the curse of the fall—(See Rom. 8:22) is delivered by the triumph of Him who came to destroy the works of the devil. There will be no more warfare for food and life; the cruelty of the animal kingdom will be gone. There will be no more blighting of crops, no more insect pests, no more serpent's hisses, no more thorns and thistles, no more pestilence. "Never more will the earth be cut for graves or drenched with tears and blood." It is like Paradise restored and clothed with blessedness. We are familiar with some of the arguments which insist that the new earth will be eternal in duration, but we have not accepted this as a settled conclusion in our own thinking.

³ The literal reading is *the sea is no more*.

⁴ The holy city. This is the crown of the redeemed world. It may be interesting to note a few contrasts between this city and Babylon.

The scarlet woman was finally embodied in a city—Babylon: The Lamb's wife has this new city.

The scarlet woman appeared in Babylon for destruction: The Lamb's wife appears in this new city for everlasting blessedness.

Babylon was man's glory, proudly lifting itself in defiance of heaven; this city is the Lamb's glory graciously condescending in benediction to earth.

Babylon was the consummation of this world's progress; this city is the consummation of the achievements of divine grace.

It is a new city—one that has never appeared before; the Eternal City, surpassing all that hath ever entered the heart of man to conceive, the imperishable palace of the immortal King of kings.

The blessedness of the redeemed world is described to us, first, negatively—

¹²unbelieving, and the ¹³abominable, and ¹⁴murderers, and ¹⁵whoremongers, and ¹⁶sorcerers, and ¹⁷idolaters, ¹⁸and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

⁵ Every tear is wiped away—tears of disappointment, neglect, poverty, suffering, persecution, bereaved affection, yearning, yes and even the tears of contrition.

⁶ Death no longer exists—Death itself shall die, not by advances in medical science, nor by mortal skill, but by the redemption of God.

⁷ Sorrow ceases—"There hearts no longer bleed in secret, there the cold shadows never again fall on sensitive souls, there the killing frosts no more settle on the springing plants or blooming flowers of human peace. Christ drank the cup of sorrow for our world and it will be found empty there."

⁸ No more crying and no more pain—"Man comes into this present world with a cry and goes out of it with a groan. The cry of pain and passion, of fear and strife, of wrong and oppression, of want and danger, of torn affection and blasted hope, of weariness and incapacity—will be hushed forever."

Second, the positive side,—

Life is there,—life in its fulness, its noblest activities and dearest associations,—eternal life.

⁹ A soul-satisfying worship is there.

¹⁰ God, Himself, is there, the possession of His own.

This passage goes somewhat into detail in telling us who the occupants of this redeemed world are to be.

¹¹ First—There will be no cowards there, who shrank from the war against sin, and the toil of upbuilding the Kingdom.

¹² No unbelievers will be there, who scorned to trust the full merit of the Atonement.

¹³ No polluted one will be there—all that is carnal or unclean is debarred.

¹⁴ No murderers there—this includes heart murder—hate and malice—these too are debarred.

¹⁵ No fornicators are there—this includes not only the lust of body but also that of the soul manifest in carnal desires.

¹⁶ No sorcerers—"those who have sought the exercise of power which God has forbidden."

¹⁷ No idolaters,—This includes not only pagan worshippers, but those who have been covetous of this world's goods and those who have revered the human philosophies in the place of the Word of God.

¹⁸ No falseness will be there—none who love or make a lie.

Second—The saints are there—The holy people of God from Abel to the last martyr under anti-Christ. God has had a holy people in every age, the pilgrims and strangers of earth, seeking the Continuing City.

B. The New Jerusalem.

XXI:9-XXII:5.

- 9 And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's
10 wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, ¹descending out
11 of heaven from God, ²Having the glory of God: and her light *was* like unto a stone most precious, even like
12 ³a jasper stone, clear as crystal; And had a wall great and high, *and* had ⁴twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are *the names* of the twelve
13 tribes of the children of Israel; On the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates;
14 and on the west three gates. And the wall of the city had ⁵twelve foundations, and in them the names of twelve apostles of the Lamb.
15 And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall there-
16 of. And ⁶the city lieth foursquare,

As we come to a closer study of the Holy City we find again, a variety of suggestions from the different teachers. The literalizing of this marvelous description does not appeal to us. To our thinking it must be a supernatural existence, and not a part of the earth.

John here sees the Lamb's wife in her home, and he views the magnificence of her glory. It is described as a city having dimensions, foundations, walls, gates and streets; the Holy City which has been the blessed contemplation of the saints of all ages. (Heb. 11:10, 16; Heb. 13:14; Jno. 14:2-3.)

¹ We notice first of all that this glorious city is of celestial origin. It is coming down—condescending—out of heaven. He who made the worlds is its Builder. The saints, too, are God's workmanship. They are begotten of the Spirit and fashioned into living stones from the dark quarries of a fallen world. The location of this city is not specifically told. Most writers incline to the view that it is not far from earth.

² The splendor of this City is transcendent in magnificence. It is as clean and pure as sunshine, and its glory is the glory of Deity. Its light—"the raiment of God"—is a brilliancy such as Saul of Tarsus saw, and such as gleamed in the Transfiguration.

³ The light of the jasper is a crystalline, violet-hued brilliance.

⁴ We are told that the foundations bear the names of the Apostles of the Lamb. Then the kingdom of God is founded upon Christ Jesus, the Son of God, the Son of Man,—His character and His Atonement.

⁵ The gates bear the names of the twelve tribes of Israel. How reasonable this seems, for it was the God-given mission of the Jews to open the gates of true religion to the sons of men.

⁶ The dimensions of God are always on a magnificent scale and we find no exception here in the measurements of the City. The measurement is that of a cube, twelve thousand furlongs in every direction. This taken literally would mean a city about fourteen

and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth
 17 and the height of it are equal. And he measured the ⁷wall thereof, a hundred and forty and four eubits, ⁸according to the measure of a man, that
 18 is, of the angel. And the building of the wall of it was of jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto clear
 19 glass. And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. ⁹The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald; The
 20 fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst.
 21 And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of ¹⁰one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass.
 22 And I saw ¹¹no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb
 23 are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: ¹²for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb
 24 is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and
 25 honour into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for

hundred miles square and fourteen hundred miles high. Commentators vary hopelessly in their opinions on this point, but we are content to take the thought that its cubic construction and its building material, pure gold, indicate the embodiment of all perfection.

⁷The wall is measured apart from the city. The suggestion of the wall would seem to be the additional protection against all uncleanness.

⁸It is measured according to the measurement of a man because it is to be the dwelling place of men.

⁹Let us examine the precious stones in the foundation.

(1) Jasper—purple in color—symbolizing promise of royalty.

(2) Sapphire—deep blue—symbolizing truth and calm. This stone held the highest place among the primitive nations of Asia.

(3) Chalcedony—the copper emerald, a pale green “like the changing color in the neck of a pea-cock.” It symbolizes purity and hope.

(4) Emerald—the deeper green—symbolic of hope.

(5) Sardonyx—the most beautiful and rarest variety of onyx. It resembles the color of the finger nail on flesh. It is symbolic of tenderness and purifying pain.

(6) Sardius—supposed to answer to our cornelian. It is fiery red and symbolizes passion, love with anguish.

(7) Chrysolite—identified by some with our amber. It is a greenish gold in color, and symbolizes manifested glory.

(8) Beryl.—Pliny describes it as resembling the bluish green of the pure sea. It is the symbol of bliss.

(9) Topaz—In color, intense yellow—its symbolism, joy of the Lord.

(10) Chrysoprasus—In color, sky blue—its symbolism, peace of God.

(11) Jacinth—In color, violet—its symbolism, promise of glory.

(12) Amethyst—In color, deep purple—It was a “lucky stone,” among the ancients, supposed to avert intoxication. Its symbolism is royalty.

Thus the blended symbolism indicates all that grace and mercy includes for the saints.

¹⁰The pearl was the richest and choicest of precious gems known to the ancients. It symbolizes purity and here the portals of pearl thru which we enter the holy city are that righteousness and obedience which is rendered by the pure in heart. They shall see God.

26 there shall be no night there. ¹³And they shall bring the glory and honour
 27 of the nations into it. ¹⁴And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither *whatsoever* worketh abomination, or *maketh* a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

¹¹This glorious abode of the redeemed has no temple. There is no longer any need of an edifice of worship for all symbols, veils, intermediate ceremonials have passed away forever. As consecrated high priests, all the saints will have come into the holy of holies, into God's overshadowing Presence, their Covering, their Temple.

¹²Its system of illumination transcends our comprehension. The city itself is a grand prism of inherent light. The glory of God's presence envelops it like an unclouded halo. The Lamb, underived Light, by the Spirit of Truth, permeates the hearts and understanding of the glorified saints.

¹³This reference to the nations would seem to bear out the theory that the earth endures and is inhabited even after the saints are enjoying the felicity of the Holy City. Many commentators so teach regarding this passage.

¹⁴The close of this chapter emphasizes the superlative holiness of the city. It is the abode of holy beings only. There is no place there for those who have said, "Lord, Lord!" but have failed to obey His commands; nor for those who have shrank from the cross, from following our Lord even to crucifixion, nor for any who would not lose their own lives for Christ's sake. Those who loved father or mother, or wife or children, or houses or lands, more than Christ will not be found there.

CHAPTER XXII.

We include this paragraph from the 22nd chapter with the previous description of Jerusalem the Golden, as this seems to be a continuation of the description. The passage we are now considering appears to apply to the interior of the City.

¹In the very heart of the City there is a wonderful river. Nothing could so enhance the charm and beauty of this place of many mansions to a son of the burning and thirsty East. It is "life water" issuing from the Throne even as the City itself is the embodiment of God's glory. Some teachers advance the thought that this blessed river is the symbol of the Holy Ghost for that celestial Tabernacle, as God and the Lamb are the Temple. It is the divine emanation from the Father and the Son which fills and rejoices the inhabitants of the City.

²On either side of the river there grows the wonderful tree. The first Eden had its tree, (Gen. 2:9) and here again it appears in all its beauty. The reading indicates more than one individual tree as it grows on both banks of the river. We take it that the

1 AND he shewed me a ¹pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and
 2 of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, *was there* ²the tree of life, which bare twelve *manner* of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree *were* for the
 3 healing of the nations. And there shall be ³no more curse: but the ⁴throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve
 4 him: And they shall see his face;

and his name *shall be* in their fore-
 5 heads. And there shall be no night
 there; and they need no candle, neither
 light of the sun; for the Lord God
 giveth them light: and they shall
 reign for ever and ever.

expression *tree of life* stands for the species, just as we speak of the oak, the apple tree, etc. It is symbolic of eternal life. Notice that it is a fruit bearing tree with fruits always in season. So the inhabitants of this glorious city drink "life water" and eat "life-fruit." This is the Homeland of the saint, the place of his citizenship even now. The symbolism of eating and drinking is the sacrament of fellowship, communion. We note that while the inhabitants of the city enjoy the fruit of this wonderful tree, its leaves are for the healing of the nations and the question again arises—are these nations living on the earth?

³ We are approaching the climax. Sin and its consequences will be no more. Never can sin, the curse of humanity, insinuate itself again. Never will another unholy ambition lift its head against the perfect will of God.

⁴ The final, eternal throne of God and the Lamb is there as the security of the City. This is everlasting bliss—Heaven.

"O dear, dear native Country! O rest and peace above!
 Christ bring us all to the Homeland,
 Of Thy redeeming love!"

C. John's Epilogue.

XXII:6-15.

6 And he said unto me, ¹These sayings
are faithful and true: and the Lord
 God of the holy prophets sent his
 angel to shew unto his servants the
 things which must shortly be done.
 7 Behold, I come quickly: ²blessed is
 he that keepeth the sayings of the
 8 prophecy of this book. And I John
 saw these things, and heard *them*.
 And when I had heard and seen, ³I
 fell down to worship before the feet
 of the angel which shewed me these
 9 things. Then saith he unto me, See

As in the opening of this precious book, we found a general introduction, then John's personal introduction, so here John gives his own epilogue which, in turn, is followed by Christ's own conclusion of this prophecy.

¹ We notice first of all the reiteration of the affirmation that these sayings are faithful and true. Three times this Book emphasizes this fact—Ch. 19:9; Ch. 21:5; Ch. 22:6. Here, as in other portions of the sacred Scriptures, we recognize that the inspired writer insists upon the authority of his message as being from God. There is no apology for what is written, even tho its sayings may be dark and difficult to comprehend. Let us face the question squarely—Is this Book what it claims to be? Was John inspired of the Holy Ghost in writing it? Is it worthy of its place in the sacred Canon? Or is it but an ingenious and spurious orientalisms? If it is a sincere work, written under divine inspiration, then we must accept its authority. To relegate it in our thinking to a place of secondary importance is to imitate that company who would deny the deity of Jesus and yet profess to admire Him as a human example. But Christ claimed divinity, hence

thou do it not: for I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship
 10 God. And he saith unto me, *'Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand.*
 11 *'He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.*
 12 And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward *is* with me, to give every man
 13 according as his work shall be. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and
 14 the end, the first and the last, *'Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the*
 15 *gates into the city. For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.*

He must be the Son of God or He is an imposter. So with this prophecy. It must be an inspired writing or else it is insincere and wholly unworthy of our attention.

² Here again, we have a benediction upon those who keep—treasure—the sayings of this Book. This word *keep* is characteristic of John. It occurs in his writings more frequently than in all the rest of the New Testament. Christ, Himself, pronounces this benediction. Would this not suggest that our Lord must have seen the present day attitude of suspicion and neglect regarding this Book and that He must have intended to especially encourage His followers in its study? May we not trace the lethargy and indifference toward this prophecy back to the devil, because he does not want the world to be informed so vividly of his utter overthrow? We are aware that it is frequently urged that a study of the Apocalypse is unprofitable because we can never understand it until we live into its fulfilment. But if God had not intended us to profit by it now, in this present age, why did He give it to John so long ago and why did Christ our Lord pronounce this benediction upon those who treasure it?

³ John is so overwhelmed in the presence of the Angel that he would worship him, but he is restrained from doing so. He is told that the angel is one of his brethren, the prophets. John is here classed in the spiritual brotherhood of the prophets. His writing of the Apocalypse thus identifies him.

⁴ "Seal not"—keep not hidden or secret. These are John's instructions. It is a divine command. Surely then, this cannot be a mere collection of mysticisms with which John amused himself in lonely Patmos. It has not been preserved as a specimen of the vagaries of an overwrought or diseased imagination. It is a prophecy inspired of the Holy Ghost, and designed of God for the comfort of His people and the warning of the wicked.

⁵ This striking passage certainly emphasizes the truth that a time is coming when character is fixed. Some commentators throw another light as well, upon this utterance. It is this, that even tho the uncovering of these things makes the devil rage more furiously and the wicked wax worse and worse, yet the truth must be declared. "Tho the sun breed pestilence and death in the morasses, and only hastens putrefaction in what is lifeless and rotten, it must not therefore, be blotted from the heavens."—Seiss. Truth is ever a savor of life unto life to those who obey it; a savor of death unto death to those who reject it.

⁶ A vital obedience is the essential thing. Not a legalistic observance of the law, or outward form of Church membership but an ingrafted life in the Vine. Some authorities add the rendering, Blessed they that wash their robes that they may have power over the tree of life, etc. See Eph. 5:25, 26. Titus 3:5; I Jno. 1:7; I Jno. 3:2, 3.

D. The Conclusion.

XXII:16-21.

16 I Jesus have sent ²mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. ¹I am the root and the offspring of David, *and* the bright and
 17 morning star. And the Spirit and the ³bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life
 18 freely. For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, ⁴If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written
 19 in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and *from* the things which are written in this book.
 20 He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly: Amen. ⁵Even
 21 so, come, Lord Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you all. Amen.

We have reached the conclusion of this marvelous Book, and find that the same Jesus who looms before us as the overtowering Presence at the beginning of the writing is here in all His majesty at the close. This is indeed, "the revelation of Jesus Christ."

¹ He calls attention once more to His character and grandeur. As the Alpha and Omega He is very God; as the offspring of David He is the Son of Man. "As Jesus, Savior, He was spoken of by the ancient prophets; as Jesus, Savior, He was born into our world; as Jesus, Savior, He died, rose again, and ascended into heaven; as Jesus, Savior, He sent the Holy Ghost, and ever liveth to make intercession for us; and as Jesus, Savior, He sent His angel to signify these things and will come again to fulfill them."—Seiss. See Matt. 1:21.

² In the 6th verse of this chapter it reads—the Lord, God of the holy prophets, sent *his angel*, and here in the 16th verse Christ says—I, Jesus, have sent *mine angel*. The reading shows that it is one and the same angel. This is another place where Jesus, our Lord is identified as Jehovah.

³ What should be our attitude toward His appearing? "Come!" This passage is frequently quoted as a gospel invitation to the sinner, and there probably is no harm done in using it in this accommodated sense, but its context bears but the interpretation that this is the attitude of the Bride toward her coming Bridegroom.

⁴ In other portions of the Scriptures we find similar expressions of the importance of not tampering with the word of God. (See Deut. 4:2 and Prov. 30:5-6.) But nowhere does this command fasten such serious responsibility upon the reader, as here. Would God give such profound sanction to a prophecy that was not essential to the believer? How fearful a thing it is to stultify or suppress the Word of God!

⁵ "Christian faith and hope have no outcome but in the glorious Apocalypse of Jesus."

Notes

Notes

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